

THE MONTH

DECEMBER, 1947

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VOL. CLXXXIV

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EDITORIAL COMMENTS

Home Thoughts from Abroad

IT may be of interest to see just how the present situation of Great Britain is viewed within a British community overseas, that of the Argentine. It is a large community—the biggest, they claim, outside the Commonwealth—and it numbers fifty thousand of British birth or descent, and very conscious too of their British loyalties and affinities. This number does not include the Irish-Argentine, who form a separate and interesting community. To nearly all the British community the word “home” means Britain, though many of them have never seen it. They have English and Scottish Protestant churches, and schools, Catholic and Protestant, for English-speaking children, and a series of social and athletic clubs. In Buenos Aires are published two daily papers in English (they appear not six but seven days in the week)—*The Buenos Aires Herald*, of twenty pages, and *The Standard*, generally with fourteen pages but of larger format. Events and developments in Britain are fully reported, indeed they receive considerable notice in Argentine journals such as *La Prensa* and *La Nacion*, which are also read in the British community; it is in consequence well informed about affairs in Britain.

Yet, apart from a number of young men and women who returned to Britain during the war to serve with the Armed Forces and the relatively few who have come out from Britain or revisited Britain since 1945, the members of this community have not seen Britain for a long time. They have to form their opinions about 1947 Britain from the impressions of returning travellers or through the Press. Returning travellers vary in their judgments. Some found Britain “dreadful,” others found it little changed. There is a spectrum of opinions, ranging from the bluff optimism that things are not too bad, that the people at home are putting up a splendid show, to the genuine sympathy which speaks of “those poor, poor people” and the terrible time they must be having. In a land of plenty like the Argentine, it is not easy to realise how widespread are the shortages in Britain, and how long the British people have had to put up with them. Least of all can they understand readily the long-term impact of seven years of rationing on household life and goods.

Not that they are unsympathetic! Just the reverse. So many food parcels are despatched to Britain that they are delayed for weeks in the Buenos Aires docks, so short is shipping space. Many a sacrifice is gladly made that such food parcels can be sent home. The proverbial absence has at least made the mind more sensitive. British national events are commemorated in the British community with rare punctiliousness. The Remembrance Day services on Sunday, November 9th, were well and reverently attended, as was the Balgrano drumhead service on the armistice day itself. The preliminaries of the royal wedding were followed most attentively, and the marriage commemorated, religiously and socially; leave was obtained to fly the Union Jack that day on all British buildings.

Views of Britain

THE great majority of this British community is *conservative* in outlook. For this attitude the first reason is psychological. Most of them have been in the Argentine for twenty years or more; many were born there, and some are Argentines of the second and third generation. The Britain they knew or, without personal acquaintance, were brought up to appreciate, is an older Britain, whose traditional features stand out all the more clearly through the enchantment lent by distance, and whose ancient and historic ways they find themselves contrasting with the new and cosmopolitan civilization of Buenos Aires as they contrast the rich variety of the English countryside with the low, flat, horizon-bound pampas of the Argentine "camp."

They feel that Britain's prestige has been to a large extent associated with the conception of a conservative and balanced Britain, respected for her integrity and solidity, and that Britain in this regard is far better represented by Mr. Churchill than by the Labour Government. I have seen literally hundreds of pictures of Mr. Churchill in the Argentine—in private houses, offices and even official quarters; I can remember only one case, in which I saw the photographs of Mr. Attlee and Mr. Bevin. It may well be that Mr. Churchill is more "photogenic" than his successors, but I do not think that his pictures have been so widely distributed throughout the Argentine on purely artistic grounds. In the minds of the British community in the Argentine he does still stand—as his successors do not and possibly could not stand—for something essentially British and for the permanent Britain of their dreams. They may be wrong—or perhaps right. But this is what, fundamentally, they feel. I have been asked so often, whether I think there are good chances that Mr. Churchill will return to power, not to have sensed and examined this feeling. If the British in the Argentine could return a member to sit in the Parliament at Westminster, there is little doubt that he would be returned with an overwhelmingly Conservative majority.

It might be urged that the majority of British people in South America are business men or agents of British firms or engineers or connected with British banks ; true, there are not many "working men," to employ the technical term, among the British in Buenos Aires. They are for the most part in business or connected with the railways, which have been built up and run by the British. Yet, this is by no means the full explanation of their conservatism.

The psychological difficulties of workers in Britain in the post-war era are properly understood by the British community in the Argentine, not least because they have similar difficulties there. One hears surprised remarks that British working men could adopt such tactics—the July and August coal strikes made a particularly bad impression both on the British and the Argentines—but they are familiar at least with the tactics. For one of the gravest problems with which the present Government of the Argentine is confronted is an epidemic of strikes, often for no serious grievance and accompanied by exaggerated demands. What germs of future trouble lie in these strikes will emerge from the fact that the Government is not strong enough to deal firmly with them and in effect accedes to the strikers' demands. One consequence of the—on the whole—justified rise in all round wages in the Argentine, and the unjustified acceptance of strike demands, has been a phenomenal rise in the cost of living and therefore the cancellation of the advantages won by the workers through the general increase of wages.

Some observers are puzzled by what looks like contradictions. Britain has for long proclaimed an export policy at all costs. Yet ships are coming to the Argentine in sand ballast, bringing nothing from Britain, though there is a ready market in the Argentine for British goods, provided that some time guarantee can be given. I heard from an unimpeachable source that, during October, more than twenty-three ships arrived from Britain in the harbour of Bahia Blanca, four hundred miles to the south of Buenos Aires. Of these vessels, at least twenty-one had come out from Britain in ballast, thus contributing nothing at all to the drive for exports. The export programme may take time to work up to a faster tempo, but no country—least of all Britain at this time—can afford to have its ships sailing empty over the Seven Seas.

The British community in the Argentine is somewhat disturbed at the slowness of the home Government to develop trade relations with Latin American peoples. True, the delays are not one-sided, witness the discussions on the transfer of the British-owned railways in the Argentine to public authority ; these have continued for a long time, without appreciable progress during the past three months. On the other hand, a British financial and trade mission has been awaited in Buenos Aires for several weeks, but its departure from London has been again and again postponed. Nationalism in the Argentine has

created certain difficulties, but these have not fundamentally altered the friendly feelings which subsist between the people of the Argentine and the British.

Seen from Abroad

TO one judging from abroad, two recent political happenings in Britain appear to have special significance. The first is the reverse of the Labour Party at the local elections at the beginning of November. The Conservative Party then gained 645 seats on councils and lost 18; the Labour Party won 43 and lost 695. Independents, standing on more local issues but in the main opposed to Labour, gained 172 seats, which more than offset their loss of 135.

These election results are important, particularly when one remembers that the Government, during its first two years of office, had won every by-election—a remarkable achievement, considering the size of the Labour majority in the House of Commons. The comfort which this series of by-elections will have brought must now be rudely shaken. Particularly will the local election figures seem significant in large industrial centres like Manchester and Birmingham, which had in the past established political loyalties that they largely abandoned in 1945. At the moment, these results have created some political confusion. Manchester has nine Labour M.P.'s out of a total of ten, but, in consequence of the November elections, the Labour Party has lost control of the city council. In Birmingham, ten out of thirteen M.P.'s are Labour; yet, there also, the local Labour Party has suffered serious defeats.

In the Manchester polling, one fact was noticed. Though Labour lost heavily, the Labour vote increased by 27 per cent. The Conservative vote increased by as much as 77 per cent. It would seem that a more widespread interest is being taken in local politics, and people who often enough are politically inarticulate are seeing the necessity of voting. This is to the good, for though it is doubtless as much a part of our democratic liberties not to vote, as to vote for one of the candidates, this liberty of abstention can have deplorable consequences. There is in Britain a class of people who are not politically minded and who rarely vote; their voting strength would normally be sufficient to win an election for either of the two big parties.

The second event which has caused surprise and mystification is the sudden resignation of Mr. Dalton. The so-called "grave indiscretion" seems raw and out of character. Mr. Dalton has played an important part in the growth of the Labour Party and held a difficult position, with general if not complete satisfaction, during the past two years. In his own party too, his prestige has been high, and this without any need of demagoguery. Nothing in his political career became him so badly as his leaving of it.

Rumour has, of course, been active and has interpreted his resignation as the result of a split within the Cabinet, on the matter of economic policy. His supplementary budget, it was declared, had not been sufficiently radical. But the Chancellor of the Exchequer does not surely frame his budgets within some particular fastness of his mind without any reference to his Cabinet colleagues. The supplementary budget will have been approved by the Cabinet. Yet the appointment of Sir Stafford Cripps as Chancellor of the Exchequer immediately after this "grave indiscretion" may well indicate a change of policy. For Sir Stafford has consistently urged a programme of maximal austerity, if Britain is to find its way out of the present crisis. No one questions his high intelligence and sense of moral purpose. Whether he possesses the practical wisdom and the *savoir faire* which are essential in a good Chancellor—that is not so clear.

Britain to-day requires wise guidance and inspired leadership. During the war it had that leadership; it does not exist or is not in evidence now. Leadership calls for personality, and the only member of the Cabinet with that personality is the Foreign Secretary. Mr. Bevin is tired and very much occupied with international problems. The position demands courage and the ability to tell the people of Britain the whole truth, and the whole of the unpalatable truth. It demands also vision, for restrictions by themselves cannot resolve a crisis and unless austerity be combined with initiative and enterprise, then the outlook is black indeed.

To one judging from abroad, what worries and puzzles a great deal is the suspicion that the Labour Government is still more concerned about long-term schemes of social policy than the immediate difficulties of the nation. That, in an emergency of this sort, the House of Commons should have devoted its energies to making constitutional changes concerning the House of Lords, which they deem necessary in order to rush through their plans for nationalising the steel industry—all this seems party and not national legislation; it is also putting the proverbial cart before the horse, with the danger that one day there will be no horse left, either to push or pull its waggon. Britons abroad, and others too, are tempted to think that the Government is more concerned with future plans than present realities and is relying, vaguely and not too honourably, upon the generosity of the United States for the solution of immediate difficulties. This may not be a fair view; but it is what, abroad, is frequently being said.

A Fateful Meeting

THE meeting of the Foreign Ministers which opened in November is the most fateful of the long series of such meetings since the end of the war. It is bound to be *decisive*; should no agreement be reached between the Western Powers and Russia, that itself will be a decision on which the Western Powers will have to act. This meeting

will be decisive for Europe ; it may in effect decide whether there will be or will not be a third World War. For, should that war ever come, it will do so because of the failure of the Big Powers to restore and reintegrate Europe.

Broadly speaking, the situation is this. The Western Powers desire to set Europe on its feet, economically and politically. The existence of a poor, distressed and divided Europe has a very adverse effect upon the United States and, even more decidedly, on Britain. One major cause of Britain's crisis is just this European instability. Trade relations are difficult in Western Europe ; they have become practically impossible between Britain and East-Central Europe.

To the destruction, damage and impoverishment which are the legacy of the war two further European problems have been added, which make European recovery an impossibility until they are resolved. The first is the collapse of Germany at the heart of Europe. A country that should be producing for its own and other peoples' needs has become a mere liability, eking out a sub-normal existence through supplies from overseas. This problem of Germany is made more complicated by the division of Germany into two portions, thus unbalancing the German economy and creating an artificial barrier between the mainly agricultural East and the industrialised West and North West. The second of these problems is the extension of this division from Germany to the whole of Europe, the practical separation of Europe into two halves—again with disastrous economic consequences, and involving the subordination of one hundred million Europeans to puppet governments that have been installed for the purposes of Soviet Russia.

Economically, the continent of Europe is a unity—not self-sufficient but roughly complementary in its parts ; the grain lands of the Danube, for instance, balance the industrial regions of the West. In the countries under Russian control the Soviet policy is clearly to tear those countries out of their European context and to incorporate them in the Soviet orbit, which is Asiatic, not European. They understand only too thoroughly that, if this policy could be carried through, Europe would be permanently lamed and crippled. Its economic unity and *wholeness* would have disappeared. One large portion of Europe would have been detached from Europe and handed over to Asia. Europe, in the East, has no natural frontiers. There its boundaries have been fixed by the peoples of Europe, for it was the genius of men that carved out Europe from the great land mass of Euro-Asia and held the Eastern ramparts against invaders from beyond. These invaders were Tartars in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and Turks from the fifteenth to the eighteenth ; they are Russians in the twentieth century. On the purely economic plane, this natural unity of European peoples must be recaptured if European economy is ever to be sound.

The Marshall plan providing assistance for countries in Europe during the next four years is admirable and necessary, and indeed generous. But it is, and can only be, a temporary measure of relief. European economy has to be restored ; and this means that Europe must be restored as Europe. There is no other way.

On the other side, the reality must be faced that Soviet Russia does not desire the economic recovery of Europe. Russia's hopes of revolution in Europe depend upon the continuance of misery and distress. A recovered or recovering Europe would find little of appeal in the crudities of Moscow. This is why we must expect, during this coming winter, a widespread attempt to interfere with the Marshall plan, with strikes and disturbances, maybe even revolution, in those Western European lands, where Russian influence is strong. This makes it all the more imperative that responsible Labour leaders, in Britain as elsewhere, shall do all they can to enlighten the working people on the subjects of Russian aims and methods and show them that any sympathy with or support of those methods is diametrically opposite to their own, and their country's, advantage. The industrial unrest in Italy has obviously been fomented from this source.

The Real Unity of Europe

THE real unity of the peoples of Europe is to be sought on a level deeper than that of economics. They are peoples who have shared the same historical experiences for a thousand years, and were formed and developed through the educative centuries of the Middle Ages. A European people is one which has played its part in the great experiment of Christendom, when a European unity was achieved—precarious but still genuine—and a unity of divergent elements. This is the secret of Europe—diversity within a real unity, a unity capable of enfolding a variety rich and rare. The religious revolts of the sixteenth century and, still more, the religious wars of the seventeenth, shattered that unity in great measure, but not entirely and not irrevocably. Since the sixteenth century the distinction in Europe between Catholic and Protestant has stood out as most radical, but to-day it is losing something of its sharp outline in the presence of a more radical challenge, that of militant atheism and materialism backed by the power and propaganda of Soviet Russia.

It is Russia's calamity, and the present tragedy of Europe, that Russia had no part in the great European experiences of the Middle Ages. There was an ancient Russian kingdom, centred around Kiev in the Ukraine, and there the Russians were converted to Christianity, in its Greek form. This did not make them un-European, for the Greeks and Serbs are European though later they were Orthodox, not Catholic. But, at the beginning of the Middle Ages, the Russians in the Ukraine were cut off from Europe by the invasions of the Tartars, who destroyed the kingdom of Kiev and drove the survivors

into the swamps and forests of the North. Throughout the centuries when Europe was being formed the Russians were subject to Asiatic overlords. Only gradually did they emerge from this eclipse at the close of the medieval period, under the princes of Moscow, later the Romanov Czars. Their Christianity, that had hardened into a formal and liturgical religion because of absence of contact with the West or with Byzantium, had kept them together during the centuries of Tartar domination, but they had had no share in the medieval experience of Europe.

Subsequently, attempts were made, by Czars like Peter the Great, to "europeanize" Russia, but with no permanent consequences. The upper classes and the intelligentsia in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries adopted French and German habits of thought and life; but the Russian people remained unaffected; they continued, in the main, to lead their Asiatic or semi-Asiatic existence. The Bolshevik revolution, however much it may claim Marx as its source of inspiration, has further emphasized the Asiatic aspect of Russia. The classes which had European connections were liquidated, and Russia has been hermetically sealed against European influence for more than twenty years.

The Russian problem to-day is not merely the problem of Communism. It begins as the problem of a vast Asiatic Power that has secured a strong foothold in Europe. Nothing is more harmful and more out of touch with the realities of history than the facile thesis, of which happily less is said now than was said two years back, that East-Central Europe is a natural sphere of influence for Russia, while the remainder of the Continent is a field of influence for the Atlantic Powers. Such a division completely ignores the significance of Europe.

Lessons of History

IN any summing up of the Russian situation the point must not be missed, that Russian policy now is the continuance of the Czarist foreign policy of the past two centuries.

In that policy one can distinguish three lines of advance in Europe. The first lay Westwards along the shores of the Baltic. Earlier wars with Sweden had secured for Russia certain strategic lands. Here progress was slow because of Prussian resistance. The peace treaties after 1918 reinstated the Baltic peoples—Estonians, Latvians and Lithuanians—in their independence. It must stand to the credit of Mr. Chamberlain that he would not barter this independence to secure an Anglo-Russian understanding in the spring months of 1939.

The second line of advance lay through Poland. The eighteenth century partitions of Poland were the work of Russia and Prussia, and it was Russia which received the major share. History recalls that there was grave danger, in 1814 and 1815, of war between the Allies,

with Russia, on one side, and Britain and Austria, on the other, because of Russian aggression in Poland. During the past eight years, Russia has once more pursued this policy : firstly, by means of a pact with Germany which allotted her the Eastern half of the Poland of 1939, and later through the iniquitous Yalta agreement. Russia has moved Westwards in two stages, by seizing the Eastern Poland of 1939 and thereby re-establishing herself roughly where Czarist Russia stood before 1914, and then by controlling, through a puppet government, the post-Yalta Poland, which also has been pushed further to the West.

Advocates of the Yalta agreement on the ground that the United States and Britain had then to yield to *force majeure*, forget the second important section of that agreement, which referred to the setting up of a broader and, of course, democratic administration in the part of Poland not handed over to Russia. The recent escape from Poland of M. Mikolajczyk is a clear sign, if signs be still wanted, that the Yalta guarantees given to the *people* of Poland, who remained nominally independent, have proved worthless. They were guarantees given by the representatives of the United States and Britain, and it was British arguments which prevailed upon M. Mikolajczyk to return to Warsaw and to provide the promised "broader" element in what all the time has been a puppet show of Communism. M. Mikolajczyk has happily escaped the fate of M. Petkov in Bulgaria and of Dr. Maniu in Roumania. In these occupied countries the Russians are doing away with all present political opposition, and finding pretexts for ridding themselves of future potential opposition leaders of worth and note. The behaviour of the puppet governments of Poland, Bulgaria and Roumania has been as tyrannical as it has been impudent.

The Third Direction

THE third line of direction of Russian foreign policy, and the most important during the nineteenth century, lay towards the Eastern Mediterranean. Ever since the Turkish capture of Constantinople in 1453, that city was thought of as a Christian heritage that must be rescued from the Turks, much as the Latin Crusaders envisaged the recovery of the Holy Land. With the development of the theory of Moscow as the "Third Rome" came the aspiration that one day Holy Russia would restore Constantinople or the "Second Rome" to Christian hands.

It was not, however, religious sentiment that directed Russian policy in the nineteenth century. The Turkish Empire was weakening. Russia planned to secure Constantinople and therefore control of the Straits, thus opening up a way to the Eastern Mediterranean. Later, as Turkish rule in the Balkans disintegrated, she hoped to assume that rule herself, thereby having one more approach to the Mediterranean and, by means of the Danube, a road into the heart of Europe. It

is no exaggeration to state that Russia hoped to succeed to the position and possessions of the Turks in South-Eastern Europe, and just as little exaggeration to suggest that this is what the Western European Powers feared. Hence the Anglo-French war in the Crimea against Russia in the mid-nineteenth century ; hence, too, the narrow escape from another war in 1877, this time by Britain and Austria against Russia. Seen against this background, it is not surprising that, when the first World War did come, it was in the first instance concerned with Austro-Russian problems in the Balkans.

How far ethical standards can be brought in to pass judgment on historical policies is not always, possibly not often, clear. But the existence of these tendencies and directives must be noted, if we are to assess the actual situation in Europe to-day, particularly the problem of European countries *vis-à-vis* Soviet Russia.

The countries of the Balkans and, since the collapse of Austria-Hungary, its succession states as well, have been at the mercy, first of Germany, and then of Russia. The attempt at domination here has brought misery and persecution to these countries, and a second World War. A continuance of the attempt, from the Russian side and on the present lines, is the most likely cause of another world conflict. If there is to be permanent peace, these East-Central countries of the European Continent must be restored to their proper independence. The Western Powers must gradually persuade Russia to retreat into its proper domain. This is why the best guarantee of peace in the immediate future resides in a firm and consistent policy, particularly on the part of the United States. Later, these East-Central peoples must join in one or two federations. The first, if two there be, to include the Baltic nations, the Poles, Czechs, Slovaks, Hungarians and Austrians ; the second, to comprise the Balkans with Roumania. These peoples would retain their local liberties and loyalties, and there would be every consideration for cultural and provincial independence ; but they would agree to pool their national sovereignties in matters like defence, common economic policy and international relations. Only by some arrangement of this kind can these peoples be rescued, in the first place, from the dark night of slavery which they are now enduring and from their future fears.

The Problem of Communism

WHEN the Russian problem has been considered in its historical context, we are brought back to its more modern expression in terms of militant Communism. We are faced to-day with Communist groups, in every country, that have nothing to do with the political life of the country, in which they are (though every pretence is used to show they have), but are frankly pro-Russian groups, following out a policy dictated to them by headquarters in Moscow. The old days, when Communism might be thought to have something to do with

social justice and reform, have long vanished. Communist parties to-day are simply "Trojan horses" within the framework of, generally of too-long suffering, democracies. And—it must be remembered—everything Russian, everything Communist, is directed to that same end. This was brought out very clearly in the report of the Royal Commission on Russian spying in Canada during the war, which showed that a number of highly placed Soviet Embassy officials were involved in the espionage. It was shown more recently, when the Government of Chile expelled two Yugoslav "diplomats," for interference in the domestic affairs of Chile. Scratch a Russian, it used to be said, and you have a Tartar; scratch a Communist, and you have a potential Russian agent.

On October 30th, the Chilean Minister of the Interior made a forthright speech, in which he revealed the true character of certain Soviet organizations set up in Latin America, ostensibly for cultural purposes and for work among Slavs. Their real object, he asserted, was to spread Soviet propaganda and aid the infiltration of Soviet ideas. He gave details of a network of such societies, co-ordinated from Uruguay, with cross references to Brazil, Paraguay and Bolivia. Chile and Brazil have now broken off relations with Russia, and it is clear that Communism in South America has suffered a severe setback. The Argentine maintains her relations with Russia, possibly as some counterpoise to the influence of the U.S.A., but these relations continue, from the side of the Argentine, very thin and formal.

Returning in thought from America to Europe, it is again evident that Communists on the European Continent are determined to do all they can during this coming winter to make more difficult the internal position of France and Italy. Whether they intend to push events to a state of civil war, is not yet apparent. They too have their doubts and misgivings; they share the uncertainties and fears of their Moscow masters. None the less, they are everywhere fomenting obstruction and chaos. Strikes in Italy and revolt in Marseilles—these are part of the programme, which can be dealt with only by the maximum of firmness on the part of the Western Nations.

A curious article appeared in the London *Times* for November 19th; it was curious in the sense that many *Times* editorials and articles have been curious these last three years—curious in that it might have been written, save for a handful of qualifications, by a Communist. It deplored the violent division of opinion on the Continent of Europe and attributed this division largely to the growing forces of the Right, which apparently it identified with remnants of Italian Fascists and French Vichyites. The article had no conception at all of any genuine conservative resistance to the fractious and disintegrating tactics of Communists which have made it impossible for any parties of the Centre or less extreme Left to work with them, save for the party in Italy of Signor Nenni. It gave no sign of understanding that the reaction in

favour of General de Gaulle in France had nothing to do with Vichy, but a great deal to do with the determination of patriotic Frenchmen to have finished with this Russian interference in French internal affairs. And, when one begins to compare the record of General de Gaulle and that of the French Communist Party, in their several relations with Vichy, one discovers very soon that de Gaulle opposed Vichy from the start and became the voice of living anti-Vichy France, whereas the French Communists, until Hitler chose to invade, on June 21st, 1941, the country of their allegiance, were apt and servile ministers of the Nazi occupants of France. Much indiscriminating and nauseating nonsense has been talked about the Communist love for freedom, and the Communist share in resistance movements, and the motives behind such resistance, when—eventually but very late—it did materialise.

The Russian Outlook

IN discussing Russia and the problem of Communism, we are inclined to assume that the Russian rulers are complete masters of the situation. Within Russia, they may well be masters, for they have perfected a system of terror and ubiquitous control. The question remains, what is their present outlook? For many years, they have held power in Russia and have brooked no opposition; they have kept Russia sealed against all influence from the West and against all ideas which were not "orthodox," from the Bolshevik standpoint. What kind of mental balance have they preserved? Do the Russian leaders really believe in the fantastic propaganda which they so widely and incessantly spread? The possibility is that they do, and that they imagine, for instance, that the Western Powers have entered into a vast "war-mongering" campaign against Russia.

It is part of the Nemesis of a totalitarian state, within which no opposition is tolerated and no deviation from the party line goes unpunished, that the leaders of that State end by having no understanding at all of other peoples. Once the mind is degraded to be an instrument of a servile acceptance of political directives, no matter how ridiculous, or how inconsistent with opinions professed only a short time back, all power of judgment is lost. Once that has gone, no amount of cheap and versatile cunning can take its place. It is possible that the leaders of Soviet Russia have come to believe their own propaganda, have become infatuated with their own lies. That might lessen, to some extent, the measure of their awful responsibility, but at the same time it might further increase the danger to world peace.

There is also the possibility that such leaders, knowing little of normal human reactions in an atmosphere of political liberty, might vastly overestimate the importance and power of Communist parties in other countries, and, in this exaggeration, commit themselves to some step or policy which might result in war.

A VISIT TO GERMANY

SOME IMPRESSIONS

IT may be as well to state at the beginning of this article that the following impressions are, as the title indicates, *some* impressions, i.e. I do not propose to give a complete picture of my impressions of Germany. Secondly, the word 'impressions' has been chosen purposely, on account of its subjective colouring. Even if one has lived in Germany before the war and even if one has had a good deal to do with Germans, it is difficult to feel confident that one has attained anything like an adequate understanding of the Germans or an adequate and purely objective picture of the present situation. One can, of course, attempt to check one's impressions by comparing notes with those who have lived for a considerable time in Germany before and since the war (and the present writer has indeed generally found that his private impressions coincided for the most part with the impressions of British officials with whom he came in contact); but then one is faced with the fact that some of those who have the greatest title to speak about Germany are precisely those who are the least willing to dogmatise. There are people who spend a few days in a foreign country and are then ready to dogmatise about it for the rest of their lives, and there are also those who form fixed impressions of a nation based on contact with a very restricted section of the population or even on a few emotional experiences; but if one realises the difficulty there is in forming a fully adequate and objective picture of individuals whom one has known over a considerable period, one will be less ready to dogmatise about nations. There is, therefore, all the more excuse, if excuse be needed, for making a selection from one's impressions and deliberately leaving a good deal unsaid.

Symbolic of the material situation in Germany is the row of children standing, at intervals from one another, by the railway track, which one sees directly one has crossed the frontier. I say that this sight is symbolic, because it is not necessary to suppose that the actual children standing there and waiting hopefully for food to be thrown to them from the train are precisely those who are worst off and most undernourished: one is passing through farm land, not through the outskirts of a city. But it is an undeniable and universally admitted fact that a great many people in Germany to-day are suffering seriously from undernourishment, and there is no use in labouring the fact. In the first large town I passed through I was rather surprised to see the healthy appearance of the inhabitants; but it was August, and one could see for oneself that the river banks

were crowded with sun bathers. The fact of the matter seems to be that while some Germans are comparatively well off for food (farmers, for instance, though they were badly hit by the drought, which dried up the potatoes and vegetables on which they so largely depend), the majority suffer from undernourishment rather than from actual starvation and are thus in no position to stand up to disease. The incidence of tubercular infection is certainly high,¹ and one has only to visit a hospital to see with one's own eyes the results of undernourishment. If the Germans were able to obtain the rations to which they are entitled on paper, things would not be so bad ; but in point of fact they cannot do so, and if they wish to get anything approaching enough to eat, they are compelled to have recourse to private initiative (to give it a polite name). When one sees the crowded local trains, when one sees Germans trudging back to the town from the country with sacks over their shoulders, when one meets obvious instances of parents who have gone short in order that their children may have sufficient, when one realises how many people there are who go to their work breakfastless, when one realises the anxiety and constant worry created by the ever present problem of food and the expenditure of time and energy and money (or rather its equivalents) needed in order to give but a partial solution to the problem, one understands how the food question has come to dominate the German consciousness. One may become impatient with the obstinacy with which many Germans (even some who are in a position to know better) cling to the conviction that the Occupying Power is slowly, but deliberately, starving them to death ; but all the same one cannot but sympathise deeply with the German people in its present situation. Impatience at erroneous ideas and at what may appear to be an overdose of self-pity, coupled with a forgetfulness of the sufferings of other nations, cannot alter the facts, and the facts are certainly grim. Not only do the Germans not have enough to eat, but they are, in most cases, without fuel for the winter. One would be astonished to see a crowd of English families merrily pillaging a standing coal train in broad daylight ; but in Germany one views such spectacles without much astonishment, and if one lived there for some time, one would doubtless become accustomed to them. A priest asked a young altar boy to do something on Christmas Eve ; but the youngster replied that he was engaged that day, as he had to steal coal. One may laugh at such incidents ; yet it can hardly have a good effect on the youth when, owing to the pressure of circumstances, they are brought up to obtain food and fuel by irregular means which, however understandable, are not permitted by the law. I am not thinking of the criminal types who make their living on the black market and trade on the misery and want

¹ I was told that a high percentage of students at Bonn are infected ; but I forbear to quote the number, as I have not checked its accuracy

of other people, but of the normal youth ; and I am not thinking of the question of moral guilt, which is hardly relevant in the circumstances, but of the effect on character and the resulting attitude towards the State, for it must be remembered that the infringement of regulations is by no means simply the infringement of the regulations of a foreign Power.

Leaving the train at Krefeld, I was taken by car to Bonn, thus passing through Cologne, a city which I had known before the war and which I revisited several times during the course of my stay in the British Zone. In England the ruins caused by the war have been cleared away, or at any rate cleared up, whereas in Germany this is not the case, except for the actual roadway (and even then not all the streets are fully clear). In Cologne, for instance, one passes through street after street of gaunt ruins, and one wonders where the people manage to live. The fact is, of course, that very many people live herded together in cramped quarters, which for overcrowding must far outdo the London slums of past years. The problem is greatly aggravated by the arrival of refugees from the east, who have added to the problems of the British and German authorities. The refugees, coming from different parts of Germany (or what was Germany), are not always well received by their compatriots ; but although one can have nothing but sympathy for the refugees, one can probably understand the attitude of many Germans in the western parts of the country, if one tries to put oneself in their place. With food as short as it is and living conditions what they are, it would probably require more than ordinary virtue to receive a flood of additional inhabitants with open arms. It is true that some Germans, who are comparatively well off from the material viewpoint, could do more to help than they do ; but one can also remember that the evacuees in this country were not always received with great enthusiasm.

Bonn did not suffer very much from the war. The part of the town bordering the Rhine was destroyed ; but I think that I am right in saying that a good deal of the damage occurred in the fighting towards the close of the war. In any case the greater part of the town is still intact, though the main building of the University was destroyed. This meant that the Courses arranged by the Foreign Office and the Education Branch of the Control Commission had to take place elsewhere. Both the University Vacation Course and the Adult Education Course took place at Bad Godesberg, the former at the Jesuit College, the latter at the Otto Kühne Schule or Pedagogium. The University Vacation Course was meant for undergraduates, male and female, and the students, of various nations including a strong delegation from Great Britain, lived together in a large building in the grounds of the Aloisianum, which the Jesuit Fathers had placed at the disposal of the authorities. They eat together in a common refectory in the main block of the College, the British and German

rations being pooled. The fact that the students lived together in this way greatly facilitated the free, personal and friendly intercourse which was probably the most valuable feature of the Course. Unfettered intercourse with foreign students and free expression of opinion were hardly possible for German students under the Nazi régime, and full use was made of the opportunity offered. Lectures were given in the open air and there was plenty of time and opportunity for bathing and short expeditions ; so the Course provided the German students with something in the nature of a holiday as well as an intellectual exercise. In the middle of the Course a long day was spent on a Rhine steamer, enlivened by conversation and dancing. A number of professors from the University took part in this expedition, and several of them attended lectures during the Course. If the atmosphere of the Course was friendly and informal, this was due not least to the British delegation, the members of which were well chosen by the British authorities and showed a real sense of responsibility. The Adult Education Course, which was attended by a hundred and thirty-one students, was also successfully organised and run. Though the present writer was primarily concerned with the University Course, he was invited to give a talk one Sunday morning to the participants in the other Course on the subject of Religion and the future of Europe.

German university students have no easy lot at the present time. Apart from the difficulty of obtaining books and paper they are faced with the difficulties of feeding and housing. There is nothing exceptional in this, of course, but the students have generally neither the time nor the money to provide for themselves by the methods to which so many Germans have become accustomed. Moreover, though some are comparatively well housed, others are compelled to live together in extremely trying and inconvenient circumstances or to live so far from the university town that they have to make a considerable journey whenever they wish to attend lectures. The situation varies from place to place of course : while Cologne is practically entirely destroyed, Göttingen is practically untouched ; but the situation is complicated for the students, as for the rest of the population, by the influx of refugees. As to the professors, their housing conditions are comparatively easy, because their houses are now exempt from requisitioning, while suitable accommodation has been found for professors from the Russian Zone who have accepted positions in the western universities. This does not mean, however, that they are necessarily well off for food, and in any case they suffer from lack of recent foreign literature and periodicals in their respective subjects. Given the general circumstances, the interest taken in intellectual matters and the number of congresses held (at Bonn congresses on psychology and anatomy, for instance, were held in the summer vacation) are to the credit of the German universities.

Between the end of the University Vacation Course and the beginning of the Catholic Academic Week at Bonn the present writer went on a short lecture tour under the auspices of the Religious Affairs Branch and as a lecturer sponsored by the Newman Association. The lectures at Düsseldorf-Oberkassel, Düsseldorf, Duisburg-Hamborn and Hamburg were delivered to Catholic audiences for the most part, in particular to the local branches of the Society of Catholic Graduates, corresponding more or less to the Newman Association in Great Britain. The majority of the lectures were on the intellectual life of Catholics in England, and, to judge by the numbers attending, this theme was of considerable interest to the German Catholics. In their isolated condition educated Germans are naturally anxious to hear something about intellectual developments and problems in other countries, and educated German Catholics of the British Zone take a real interest in hearing something of the problems, policies, plans and achievements of their fellow Catholics in this country, especially when they feel that there is some similarity between the problems which face us and the problems which confront them. When I mentioned to an English Catholic that I proposed to speak on the intellectual life of English Catholicism, he remarked: "What on earth can you find to talk about?" I was rather inclined to make the same reflection myself when I was first asked to address the Hochschule katholischer Akademiker at Bonn on this topic; but a little further reflection showed me that the difficulty would be, not to find something so say, but rather how to say what one would like to say within a reasonable period of time. For example, a discussion of the question of a Catholic university in this country, which still comes up from time to time, is sure to be of interest to a good many German graduates, who have considered and are still considering the same question in regard to Germany. Again, it is of interest to German Catholics to hear something on our contemporary Catholic literary figures in England, while Newman is a perennial subject of interest in Germany, where his thought is much discussed. Further, if one reflects for a short time, one will see that the work of adult education so vigorously begun by the Newman Association, the effort towards the foundation of a Catholic People's College, the study circle week-ends inaugurated by the nuns of the Cenacle and other similar movements, are directed to the fulfilment of needs which have grown out of the development of English Catholicism in the last century and, on the other hand, out of the development of the religious situation in the country as a whole, as it affects Catholics. In other words, the present attempt to deepen and extend the intellectual life of Catholics in certain directions must be seen in the light of the development of Catholicism since the emancipation, and in the light of the general religious and intellectual history of the country in recent times. If one developed one's theme on those lines,

there would be no lack of matter. Again, the relations between Catholics and Protestants in Great Britain, with special attention to the Sword of the Spirit Movement founded by Cardinal Hinsley, provide a subject which is likely to interest the Catholics of a country where religious divisions were deep and where there was little real contact between the different Confessions until their common lot under the Nazi régime drew them together.

In spite of the distressing material conditions of the country there is a considerable amount of intellectual activity among German Catholics. I should like to mention the *Augustinuswerk* at Hamburg, and the regular courses of lectures and study circles which are organised in that predominantly Protestant city. For example, a regular course of lectures is held in a Church, the lectures being of a kind that would interest Protestants as well as Catholics. In this connection one may mention the fact that not a few conversions to Catholicism are now taking place. People who in past years have given up the practice of their religion not infrequently seek reception into the Catholic Church instead of taking up once again the practice of their religious duties in the Protestant fold to which they formerly belonged. But the fact that a certain number of conversions take place does not mean embitterment of the relations between Catholics and Protestants. For one thing, the fact that conversions do take place is partly due to the better relations between the Confessions which have come into existence in recent years, and also to an increasing knowledge of Catholicism on the part of Protestants. Prejudice still exists, of course; but there is every hope that co-operation in the task of rebuilding their country on Christian lines will bring the members of the various Confessions closer together. They can hardly fail to see that they have much in common in contrast with the adherents of certain other ideologies. The Catholic chaplain of one university told me that at the close of a university course which was to take place in the autumn he planned to have a joint religious service, at which he would say prayers and a Protestant clergyman would give an address. Whether this plan would commend itself to our moral theologians is another matter; but it is at least evidence of vastly improved relations between German Catholics and German Protestants.

After giving two lectures at Hamburg I returned to Bonn for the *Hochschulwoche katholischer Akademiker*, which lasted from the third of September to the eleventh of September inclusive, and was held in the Pedagogical Academy on the outskirts of the town near the Rhine. Intended primarily for graduates it was attended also by a considerable number of students, and the number of participants amounted to about seven hundred, the professors, lecturers and students coming not only from centres in the British Zone, but also from other Zones. In the mornings of the first four days lectures were given on philosophy by Professor Josef Pieper and on theology by Professor

G. Söhnngen, both of Münster. Josef Pieper, successor to Peter Wust, took as his theme the question, "What does philosophizing mean?", and his four lectures were of outstanding merit. Possibly not all he said would be entirely acceptable to those whose idea of philosophy consists in the repetition of the sayings of the Angelic Doctor; but, to any one who does not look on a little independent thought as a sin crying to Heaven for vengeance, it was a real pleasure to listen to a lay philosopher who has already shown himself to be no unworthy successor to Peter Wust. Professor Söhnngen's theme was the Scriptural doctrine of the image of God in man, while on the evenings of those days lectures were given on problems connected with the relations of science and technics to religion and culture. Thus Professor Behn, professor of philosophy in the University of Bonn, spoke on the problem of value in technics, and Professor Koessler on technics and religion. On the Sunday the Archbishop of Paderborn pontificated before a great crowd in the Münsterkirche, and Monsignor R. L. Smith was in choir, representing the British authorities and the British Catholic clergy in Germany. The evening lectures on the Sunday and Monday were devoted to medicine in its cultural and religious bearings, while the last three evenings, as also the mornings, were given predominantly to consideration of political theory under various aspects. Thus Professor Alois Dempf came from Vienna to lecture on the philosophy of the State, while other professors lectured on the theory of Right, on Church and State, on the political theory of St. Augustine, and on the transition from the Power State to the Constitutional State. Discussion circles were also held after the evening lectures. On the Sunday evening there was also a special performance in the theatre of Sophocles' *Prometheus Bound* (in German) and of Strindberg's *Christus*.

The organisation of a Congress of this kind in present circumstances involved, of course, a great deal of forethought and preparation; but the untiring energy and devoted service of the Secretary, Dr. Paul Wolff, and his collaborators triumphed over all obstacles. The consignment of potatoes and vegetables which the Dutch delegation led by Dr. K. Hahn (it included professors from the Catholic university of Nijmegen, students, and the well-known Dutch lyricist, Gabriel Schmit) brought with them was greatly appreciated, since, as already mentioned, the long drought in the Rhineland had resulted in a scarcity of these things. The material side of the Congress being thus satisfactorily settled, the intellectual and spiritual aims could be smoothly attained, and no one who was present could have any doubt of its success. Before the war the Congress was held in Salzburg; but since Germans cannot journey to Austria it was decided to hold a German Catholic Congress, at least until such time as it would be possible to meet once again at Salzburg. The Congress which took place at Bonn this summer was the second to be held since the war,

and it is proposed to repeat it next year, though it seemed to be agreed that in present circumstances a week would be sufficient. But though the formal sessions of the Congress were both interesting and enjoyable the pleasantest memories of the present writer are connected with the informal gatherings of professors, which took place on several occasions in the late evenings at a private house in the town. The memory of the friendliness and courtesy of the German professors and lecturers is still fresh in the writer's mind.

The Catholic population of Germany is, of course, very many times larger than the Catholic population of England, and the number of Catholic professors and lecturers to be found in the German universities is, therefore, proportionately higher, a fact which greatly facilitates the holding of a Congress such as we have described. Moreover, it means that a Congress of this type in Germany wears a less clerical air than an analogous Congress in England would probably have. At Bonn the speakers were mostly laymen, whereas in England, if philosophical themes were to be treated, the speakers would I suppose be inevitably priests for the most part. Perhaps one may remark with some diffidence that it is to be regretted that there is in England no layman who occupies a chair of philosophy in a university. One will not be misunderstood, I hope, if one observes that a lay philosopher has this advantage: that he is not officially bound to one particular philosophical tradition, but enjoys that freedom which is required by the Thomist conception of philosophy as an autonomous discipline, provided of course that what he says is not at variance with the dogmatic or moral teaching of the Church. As the interest of English Catholics in philosophical and theological themes grows, and one trusts that it will grow, it is perhaps not too much to hope that the day will come when a Catholic will occupy one of the chairs of philosophy in one of the great universities of Britain.

I have not spoken in this article of the political situation in Germany, nor do I think that much good can be done by private citizens who air their views freely without sufficient knowledge of the facts and of the concrete possibilities; but it is obvious to anyone that democracy loses much of its appeal while the material conditions of Germany remain as they are to-day. Moreover, in order to put democracy across to another nation, one has first of all to be quite clear as to what is meant by democracy, what are the fundamental principles which underlie Christian democracy, and not to confuse these principles with practical applications and methods which may or may not be essential and which may or may not be suitable to the tradition and character of another nation. In his *Philosophy of Right* Hegel remarks that Napoleon, in his (i.e. Hegel's) opinion, gave the Spaniards a more rational constitution than the one they formerly enjoyed, but that what in itself is a more rational constitution is not necessarily

the best fitted to a particular nation. Nevertheless it is certainly essential that the Germans as a whole should be induced to feel their responsibility for the government and policy of their country, and that they should not form the raw material for the next political charlatan or group of charlatans which may turn up. It is, then, no matter for rejoicing, though it is understandable enough in the circumstances, that German youth should, in large part, be singularly uninterested in politics, save of course in the large-scale relations between West and East (for obvious reasons). It may be objected that it is only natural that German youth should be disillusioned and sceptical in political matters, and that one cannot expect them to take an interest in German home politics so long as full control is not in the hands of Germans. But how is the transfer of power going to be safely effected if the German citizens of the future stand apart from political responsibility and co-operation? In my opinion it was not without good reason that, at the Bonn Catholic Congress, the President of the Katholischer Akademikerverband, Minister Ferdinand Kirnberger (retired), appealed to the youth not to by-pass political life and interests. One may disregard politics because one is faced with the more immediate material needs of the moment, or one may despair of politics and seek escape and refuge in purely intellectual interests; but if this happens on a considerable scale the helm of State awaits any political adventurer, or any set of determined men, who have the ambition to grasp it. It would be most regrettable if German Christians, Catholic and Protestant, did not make up their minds to shoulder manfully their political responsibilities and ensure, so far as may lie in their power, the application of Christian principles in the political and social spheres.

In conclusion the present writer would like to express his satisfaction at the courteous consideration he always met with from those British officials with whom he came in contact. As to the Germans, he can say with truth that neither as Englishman nor as priest did he meet with unfriendliness or hostility, while he looks back with real pleasure to his contacts with the academic circles with which he was primarily concerned.

FREDERICK C. COPLESTON

EDITORIAL NOTE

All contributions submitted to the Editor must be typed and be accompanied by a sufficiently large stamped addressed envelope—stamps (or Post Office coupons from abroad) alone will not suffice. Articles submitted should be concerned with matters of general interest, and be the fruit of expert knowledge or original research. They should not ordinarily exceed 3,000 words, and must be intended for exclusive publication in "The Month," if accepted.

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NATURAL HAPPINESS IN THEOLOGY

DID St. Thomas invent moral philosophy? "Of course not," one might say. But then, if the question means to distinguish between the ethics of the pre-Christian philosophers and moral philosophers such as it has been expounded in the last three centuries, the answer might not be so ready. It may be that St. Thomas was the first practitioner of moral philosophy in the modern sense, that is, of a philosophy where some regard is had to the immortality of the soul. Recently, however, a book has been written by Fr. de Lubac¹ which claims, among many other points, that St. Thomas had no idea of considering man *in puris naturalibus*, striving with his natural powers for a natural happiness; but that, to be precise, the idea of philosophizing over the natural man came fully-formed from the brain of Thomas de Vio, Cardinal Cajetan, in the year of grace 1507. Thereafter the idea lay about without having much notice paid to it, until Molina, Suarez and a few others saw that it was a useful idea for the refutation of Baius, whose heresy was rather pestilent in their time, at the close of the 16th century: this purpose it served extremely well, but has long outlived its usefulness, and is a mere encumbrance to Christian thought, like the discarded weapons, the Martello towers and battering-rams, of a past age.

Fr. de Lubac designates his work as a historical study, and devotes two chapters (V. and VI) and an appendix to the question of *pure nature* and the happiness possible for it. His principal statement of his position may be rendered thus: "The idea of *pure nature* had then (in the time of Baius) neither the antiquity nor the importance for doctrine which certain recent theologians too readily ascribe to it. Its entry into theology is of recent date and it is far from having acquired an established position in the eyes of all. It was not, moreover, considerations of a religious nature that had brought the idea into being; its origin was chiefly philosophical. It was at first, apparently, one of those many abstractions which medieval speculation, from the time of William de la Mare, loved to build, one of the results of that idea of *potentia Dei absoluta* which the new theological schools recounted. The dogma of grace had no particular interest in it. Cajetan first of all, followed almost at once by his brethren Koellin and Javelli, gave it right of entry into Thomist thought and applied it to theology, claiming that the natural desire to *see* God did not, according to St. Thomas, exist in man except as he was considered by the theologian, i.e. as elevated to a supernatural end and enlightened by revelation" (p. 105). On this showing it would be Cajetan who first envisaged a natural moral philosophy by the terms of which man has a natural end

¹ *Surnaturel: Etudes historiques*, by H. de Lubac: Paris, Aubier, 1946.

and the natural law has an everlasting sanction (of a character not fully to be discerned) which the unaided reason can ascertain. It was, of course, common ground that no purely natural man had existed, or ever would; but the idea was thought useful for the purpose of analysis, much as the idea of equator or meridian is useful to the scientist. Fr. de Lubac's choice of Cajetan for the rôle of discoverer seems to have been determined by a remark of Suarez who, in citing the opinion, attributed it to Cajetan; and by the fact that it was not to be found in the pages of Capreolus, Blosius or Savonarola—a strange string of writers. Various passages of St. Thomas are passed in review in the appendix (App. C), and it is claimed that in none of these is the idea of *pure nature* to be found.

It might have been expected that in such a quest the Commentaries on the *Ethics* of Aristotle, which St. Thomas drew up in 1266, would have been brought into the field of consideration; but of this there is no sign in Fr. de Lubac's work; and indeed, in all this debate about natural desire of the vision of God, the Commentaries have been strangely neglected by all the contestants. Students of the *Ethics* would naturally expect that St. Thomas would have found the 7th chapter of Book X difficult going. Here Aristotle sets out, albeit somewhat sketchily, his ideas on natural happiness. The natural operation of the mind is speculation, or contemplation. This is superior in value to any other human activity, and has also the characteristics which qualify it for the rôle of man's natural end and happiness, for it is pleasant, it is self-sufficient and it is not subject to interruption. All that it requires more is a full span of life. Such a life might be thought too high for man, but he should reckon nothing of those who urge him to be minded of his mortality, but, as befits a man, should play the immortal as best he can, living a life that is planned for the benefit of the highest faculty in himself, his mind.

It will be at once obvious that Aristotle is not definite here about the immortality which can be promised to man. He does not seem to have been more definite in other parts of his writings, and many commentators of Aristotle have concluded (of which more anon) that he did not hold the immortality of the soul. St. Thomas of course did hold that immortality could be proved by rational argument, and the crux of his treatment of the *Ethics* is precisely: was he to take the idea of natural happiness therein exposed as applying to this life merely and so of little value for metaphysics, or was he to treat it boldly as the end-state of the natural man, whose soul was immortal in its own right? Now it must be admitted at once in excuse for the general neglect of the Commentaries which St. Thomas compiled upon the *Ethics* of Aristotle, that they are more than usually arid. Much of them is taken up with the summarizing of the topics that are being dealt with chapter by chapter; and one is soon weary of the endless refrain: "Here the Philosopher does two things, and about the first, where

he says: Virtue is a habit . . . , he makes three distinctions, first where he says, etc., etc." If medieval universities had been provided with well-arranged texts, properly headed and paragraphed, this could have been dispensed with; but then, it sometimes seems there would be nothing left of the comments of St. Thomas. This is not really the case, for he manages to introduce many enlargements upon, and elucidations of, the text. These, when concerned with points of material fact, are not often worth much attention for the scholar of to-day (as for instance the remark that the Olympic games, mentioned in the text, were held on the top of Mt. Olympus); but the comments on matters of universal import, and the metaphysical argument, are eminently worth while. The salient points of St. Thomas's comment on this chapter of the *Ethics* may now be cited somewhat more fully, in so far as they bear upon the present discussion.

St. Thomas adopts with approval the statement that among all human operations the most pleasurable is the contemplation of wisdom, and this he holds to be accepted by all men. He enlarges upon what Aristotle has to say about the reasons for this, explaining that the purity and enduring nature of this contemplation arise from its objects, which are free from matter and free from change. Its pleasure comes from the very fact that it is so unlooked for by the common run of men. He takes over Aristotle's distinction between the contemplative pleasure of search and the pleasure of contemplative possession; but whereas Aristotle rejects the pleasure of search St. Thomas makes it out to be different from that of possession only in degree and not in kind. "Greater is the pleasure of the consideration of truth that is already known than the pleasure of seeking for it, and hence Aristotle says that their life is more pleasurable who already know the truth and have their intellects made perfect by its intellectual quality."¹ At the same time it must be admitted that St. Thomas is considering both search and possession of truth as far as they are possible in this life. In this he keeps close to Aristotle.

In the 11th *lectio* on this Book X of the *Ethics*, St. Thomas goes far beyond what Aristotle ventured to lay down. Aristotle had, in a famous phrase (1177 b 33), called upon his contemplative to "play the immortal" as far as he can, rather than to be ever bearing in mind his mortality. The implication clearly was that such an attitude was but play-acting, even if it were the noblest attitude that a man could take up. St. Thomas alters the emphasis. His contemplative is to "intendere ad immortalitatem," to direct his aim upon immortality, as far as he can (implying now that he always can to some extent, but must try to the full extent of his ability), and according to the best of his ability to strive to live an intellectual life, for intellect is the best of the powers of man, being immortal and god-like. In reply to the objection that intellect being god-like is above man rather than truly

¹ In *X libros Ethicorum*, lib. X, lect. 10.

human, St. Thomas is firm in holding that intellect is the chiefest thing in man, that life according to the intellect is therefore a human life, and that all else in man is to be made instrumental to this life of intellect. Nor may it be said that an intellectual life would be proper to purely spiritual beings (such as angels) alone, for though it is proper to them it is also proper to man, in an imperfect way and by derivation.

Going now far beyond Aristotle (in *lectio* 13) St. Thomas states that the happy contemplative, who is living the intellectual life and making the good of the intellect his chief care, is also most beloved of God. Aristotle would have thought this blasphemy. Whether he or one of his scholars wrote the *Magna Moralia*, there can be no doubt that a truly Aristotelian doctrine is being enunciated when it is said there (1208 b 30): "Friendship towards God does not admit of love being returned, nor at all of loving. . . . There is, people think, a friendship towards God, but here they are wrong." None the less St. Thomas perseveres with his innovation: "Let it be supposed, as is in truth the case, that God has a care and providence over human affairs, then it is *reasonable* that He should take delight in men according to what is best in them and according to what is most akin to Himself. It is in consequence *reasonable*, also, that God should bestow His greatest benefits upon those who love their intellect and do it honour and set the good of intellect before all other goods, seeing that the very gods themselves care for those who act according to right reason and will. Now the wise man loves and honours intellect, which is among human things most beloved by God; the wise man also acts well, and according to right reason: it remains therefore that he is most beloved by God. Now he that is most beloved by God is the happiest, for God is the fount of all good. The wise man is then the happiest, for happiness consists in being beloved of God."

Obviously, therefore, St. Thomas considers, Aristotle set final human happiness in the activity of the wise man, and not in some kinship with a world-soul, as some imagine. Neither did he set it down that there was perfect happiness for men in this life, but only such as is proper to a mortal life. Although, earlier in his commentary (in lib. I lect. 9), St. Thomas had said that the happiness of the next life outpasses all rational investigation, yet here he seems certainly to have arrived at the position of laying down certain conclusions about its nature. He may not use the later terminology of purely natural happiness, but he has the substance of it. Men who cultivate their intellect are to be beloved of God. It is not a specifically Christian idea; there is no mention of the meek and humble of heart, nor of the supremacy of the mixed life, nor of little children, and no suggestion that the happiness under discussion is other than that which presents itself to the unaided reason. Still it is set down as a final happiness, not fully to be enjoyed in this life, and by some

confounded with a 'coniunctio ad intellectum agentem,' a kinship with the world-soul, which might be thought (especially by Arabians and their Catharist philosophical adherents) to await the good man after death.

To prevent the Arabians foisting their own interpretation of Aristotle upon the world St. Thomas has deftly inserted here an interpretation of Aristotle which is, to all seeming, his own. Man is to be immortal by nature, and the happiness that awaits the natural man after death is, and must be, by the canons of reason alone, the love that God bestows upon those who have cultivated their god-like reason and not left it to rust in them unused. He refrains from determining *how* God will show His love to wise men, but of the fact he admits no doubt: *rationabile est*. (To Aristotle the thing would have seemed blasphemy or madness.) Immortality and an eternal sanction, for which man is indebted to the love bestowed on him by God: if this is not natural beatitude it would be hard to know what is.

It may be true, as Fr. de Lubac has argued, that St. Thomas did not himself baptize Aristotle; but he was certainly standing by the font to catch the infant's first puling cries as he emerged therefrom. How much he strove to make him a good Christian may be seen from a tell-tale passage in the *Contra Gentiles* (II. 79) on the immortality of the soul. "It is clear," he argues, "that Aristotle, though he makes the human soul to be the form (or organizing principle) of the body, does not deny it self-subsistence or make it corruptible—a view that Gregory of Nyssa had attributed to the Philosopher—but excludes the intellectual soul from the common run of forms, saying that it remains after the body corrupts and is a kind of substance."

Most critics have the idea that Gregory of Nyssa—or really Nemesius of Emesa, whose work on the Nature of Man was popular in the Middle Ages, and two Chapters of which were circulated as a work of Gregory—is right in denying to Aristotle a belief in immortality on rational grounds. (Cf. Migne, P. G. 40.572 and 45. 205.)

That St. Thomas's effort to bring Aristotle into the path of orthodoxy was not popular with all his contemporaries may be seen from the robust and outspoken comments of Roger Marston, an English Franciscan who knew *Frater Thomas* in Paris and who was lecturing at Oxford from 1282–1284. In his *Quaestiones disputatae*¹ he delivers himself as follows: "There are furthermore certain theologians who play the philosopher—and would that they had not fallen into a way of despising the sound simplicity of the saints through the false glamour of human wisdom! They despise or disregard the wisdom of holy doctors, which is on this question abundant and unchallenged, as I judge, and for their proof of immortality they go to

¹ Roger Marston, *Quaestio disp. VII de anima*: first (Quaracchi) edition, 1932, p. 360. These *quaestiones* were unpublished until 1932.

the reasonings of creatures of Hell." The extracts that follow are taken verbatim from St. Thomas (Summa, I. 75, 2), so that there can be no doubt who is the target of Roger's choler. But he is not finished with Fra Thomas: "These arguments seem for the most part to follow Aristotle . . . , and though to certain great ones they appear conclusive, to my simplicity they are suspect for the reason given above, namely that all the wise ones of this world have in some particular been mistaken about the immortality of the soul. These arguments being deservedly suspect to men of Catholic faith, I turn with reverence to the reasonings of the saints, understanding and explaining them with dull and feeble mind as I have received them from my predecessors and masters." There follow large citations of Anselm and Augustine with arguments based upon them. In other parts of his work (pp. 196-200) Roger Marston roundly accused St. Thomas of Pelagianism: *Istud manifeste est de errore Pelagii*. He is able to show how the earlier opinions of St. Thomas on the possibility of a man avoiding sin without the help of grace were altered in his later writings very substantially: "Those who were accustomed to say these things prudently revised them in their later works." One might suggest at this point that what Roger takes for a Pelagian tendency in St. Thomas is really a desire to bring into consideration the pure nature of man as it would present itself to a philosopher.

That the explanation we are given of St. Thomas's attitude to natural happiness, and its connection with his reading of Aristotle, is not a fanciful construction may be shown from a casual remark which St. Thomas let fall in his Commentary on the Sentences (II Sent. d. 19, q. 1, art 1; in contrarium 2):

In the 7th chapter of Book X of the *Ethics* Aristotle proves the happiness of the contemplative to be superior to that of the active man because it is more lasting. But the happiness of an active life extends to the bourn of this mortal life. Therefore that of the contemplative extends further beyond this life, but not in the body, therefore in the soul. Furthermore it belongs to God to have a care and providence of all that comes about in the world, and more especially of all that happens to men, and more especially still of all that befalls the good, who are according to Aristotle's words (*ibid*) most like to God and most beloved by Him. Now it cannot be without injustice on the part of the ruler and governor that the evil should go unpunished and the good unrewarded. Injustice cannot be found in God, and so He must punish all evil and reward all good. This does not happen in this life . . . and so it seems that it will come about after this life is done.

Now Aristotle says not a word about the good man being beloved by God, and one can only conclude that St. Thomas is reading into him his own view of what a philosophy of happiness would require. He has completed the thought of Aristotle by uniting the views on happiness set forth in *Ethics* X, 7, with the idea that the soul is in the proper

sense immortal : an idea that was almost certainly not in Aristotle's mind when he was writing the *Ethics*. (Aristotle's remark, at 1115 a 26, that death is the most fearsome of all things, seeing that it is the end, and that for the dead there is neither good nor evil, is sufficient proof of this, if proof were needed.)

It is not necessary to go into the question of St. Thomas's motives in making this harmony, or to decide whether he was deceiving himself or honestly thought he was giving out the true mind of the Philosopher. It may, however, be pertinent to show that a failure to recognize this ambiguity between Aristotle and "St. Thomas's Aristotle" has led to some confusion in the debate about natural happiness. Fr. Cathrein, when in his old age he came to take part in the modern debate about natural happiness, fell into this trap of confusing the real Aristotle with St. Thomas's Aristotle : "Not before the 18th century was moral philosophy treated by Catholic theologians as a philosophical science distinct from theology. . . . Many, indeed, wrote commentaries on the *Ethics* of Aristotle, but there was no reason for treating in them of the happiness of a future life, because Aristotle is silent about it and speaks only of happiness in the present life." (Gregorianum, 1930 ; p. 408.) To which the short answer is, that Aristotle may be silent, but St. Thomas's Aristotle—who believes in a natural proof of the immortality of the soul—does not pass this question over in silence.

Cajetan, or, as we might say, the Cardinal of Gaeta (he was Master-General of the Dominicans 1508-1518 and Cardinal 1517-1534), was one of those theologians profoundly affected by the philosophy of the Renaissance. He had both studied and lectured in Padua when that university was the centre of Aristotelian studies in Europe. He was of an original cast of mind, even though he was to be chiefly famous as a commentator on St. Thomas. In his later life he gave expression to the view that the immortality of the soul could not be proved philosophically. There was a mild scandal. Cardinal Contarini wrote a reply in 50 pages showing that it could be so proved, while Cajetan's fellow-Dominican, Melchior Cano, spoke of him as of one afflicted with leprosy ! It is surprising that Cajetan admitted the possibility of *any* natural happiness, even as a speculative matter ; for such happiness would certainly presuppose that the soul which was to enjoy it must be immortal : and its immortality would have to be guaranteed on the level of pure reason. It can only have been his fidelity to what he found in St. Thomas that led him to retain the notion, added perhaps to the fact that his commentary on St. Thomas was being produced in the years from 1507 to about 1512, while his strange views on immortality were put out later in his life. The whole course of his thought on immortality has been traced out by Dr. Emilia Verga (in a special number of the *Rivista di Filosofia Neoscolastica* dedicated to Cajetan, Milan 1935, pp. 21-46), and one can

there read how he began the discussion of the problem by a lecture held in the presence of Pope Julius II in Rome on the First Sunday in Advent, 1503, in which he upheld the possibility of proving immortality by pure reason, making much use of the principle that the natural desire of the soul for immortality could not be in vain. In his commentaries on St. Thomas he kept close to the text of his master ; in those on Aristotle's *de Anima* (produced in 1509) he begins to see that Aristotle, at least in some places, denied immortality ; but he holds that this denial is contrary to sound reason : "And this opinion I shall try to show to be false according to the principles of philosophy." For more than twenty years he brooded over the problem, and then, in his declining years, as he was bringing out his commentaries on the books of Holy Scripture, he twice (on Rom. 9.21-23 and Eccles. 3. 19-21) took occasion to say that there was no rational proof of immortality.¹ "No philosopher has so far proved the soul of man to be immortal ; there appears no conclusive argument for it ; we believe it by faith and there are arguments of probability that accord with our faith." Had he come to revise in his old age his commentaries on St. Thomas, who can believe that he would have left there the contrary statements on pure nature and natural happiness which he had written as a younger man ?

So far then from Cajetan being a pioneer in the promoting of a novel idea of natural happiness, he appears to have been in fact indebted for that idea to his master St. Thomas ; while, under the influence of the real Aristotle which he underwent at Padua, and in his dealings with such men as Pomponazzi, he came to adopt a new idea, namely that philosophy treated of the happiness possible *in this life*, while all that concerned a future life belonged to theology and was dependent upon grace. The idea, outlined above as being proper to St. Thomas's Aristotle, of a loving God who will reward—and can reasonably be expected to reward—those who have set intellect before all things, because He is Himself intellect and loves those who become like Him : all this has been, in effect, abandoned. The simulacrum of divine grace which St. Thomas had constructed for his natural man (in his comments on the *Ethics*) depends on the principle that a *natural* desire cannot be in vain, and this principle Cajetan in old age forsook.

Among modern Thomists there are, in this debate on happiness, three attitudes to the principle that a natural desire cannot be in vain. Some, following upon Cajetan and John of St. Thomas, say that it is not a *natural* desire that men have for the vision of God ; others, with Suarez and the Carmelites of Salamanca, say that it is not a *desire* but a *velleity* ; while a third group say that it is not a desire *to see God* as He is, in Persons Three, but a desire to see His nature

¹ For a modern discussion of the views of Ecclesiastes, see Fr. Sutcliffe, S.J., *The Old Testament and the Future Life*, pp. 158-159.

in some obscure way. For this third group the late Fr. Descoqs claimed Sylvester of Ferrara and some lesser lights. What is not so much noticed by the disputants is that the principle (that a natural desire for God is not in vain) is held in full honour in all scholastic manuals when it is a question of proving philosophically, not that man's last end is the vision of God, but that the soul of man—being admittedly superior, of its own nature, to death—will not be annihilated by God in perpetuity. God created the soul, and this can be proved by reason. The opposite of creation is annihilation, and there might seem a natural symmetry if annihilation was to be the end of the soul after it had become disembodied and had continued for some space in that state. To rebut this suggestion, then, it is necessary for the philosopher to appeal to some argumentation of the kind which has been seen above to be familiar to the Aristotle of St. Thomas, about the reasonableness of a reward for the soul which has set intellect before everything else, and which has lived in accord with a fundamental desire to be what it was meant to be, an intellectual creature. St. Thomas's Aristotle could not talk about the vision of God because it had not been revealed to him, but he did his best to fashion a simulacrum of it in this paradise of knowledge and intellection: a paradise, be it noted, of a selfish kind, towards which men go alone, and towards which the imitation of Christ will not carry them one step.

Fr. de Lubac has made a synthesis of majestic sweep out of all this. He would maintain that the cohesion between nature and grace, established by St. Thomas, was broken by Cajetan, Molina and the theologians who follow after the Council of Trent, and who were not of the same calibre as the leaders of the religious revival which they were trying to serve. Thereafter Montaigne, Descartes and the rest become acquainted, by some process of osmosis, with the dislocation between the worlds of nature and of grace as it afflicts the theologians. After which the independence of philosophy, the Enlightenment and the Secular Society spring up as easily as the bracken on a Welsh hillside. Such a synthesis has its own fascination, but it is the fascination of the romantic, rather than the spell of truth. It is as if he has been reading to us some of those Voyages of St. Brendan the Navigator. "Brendan sailed over the strong-maned sea, and over the storm of the green-sided waves, and over the mouths of the marvellous dread bitter ocean. Here he saw a multitude of furious red-mouthed monsters with abundance of great sea-whales. And he found beautiful marvellous islands, yet he tarried not therein." In spite of Brendan's voyages Hy Brassil is still as far away as ever, and in spite of these entrancing syntheses the origins of the revolt against revelation remain obscure to the historian of thought. One might hazard the guess that they are more likely to be found among the Averroists of Padua in the 15th century than among the theologians of the Counter-reformation in the 16th.

J. H. CREHAN

MEN AND BEASTS

I. UNEASY TRUCE

ONE of the queerest war stories I have ever heard was told to me recently in Finland by a young infantry sergeant who had spent part of the "second" war (as the Finns term their 1941-44 campaign to distinguish it from the earlier "winter" war) in the great forest land on the Soviet side of the frontier, east of Kuusamo in the waist of Finland: forest land uninhabited but for wolf, bear and elk, and a few fishermen who still drag the rivers for pearl-oysters.

For long periods the sector was quiet—"a good rest cure," as Sergeant Isomaa put it—but in the summer of 1944 it flared into activity; the sergeant's own company was cut to pieces by Red artillery and he found himself, the only survivor as far as he knew, trying to regain contact with other units.

Making his way through the vast forest of spruce and pine and birch, he came suddenly upon a bear intently feeding: at first he was all for giving "Honeypaw" (as the Finns call the bear) the right of way, but curiosity made him sink down behind some juniper bushes to watch.

Though "Honeypaw" was eating blueberries with evident relish, something was disturbing him, for every now and then he would raise his snout and anxiously sniff the forest air. No doubt like many other animals he had been terrified by the thunder of battle, for many Red shells had strafed this part of the forest, though what their target was the sergeant didn't know.

Sergeant Isomaa sniffed the air as well. He knew it was not his own presence that had upset the bear, for he was standing to leeward of the animal.

Titmice and gay crossbills and other small birds were flitting through the trees, and presently a magnificent elk appeared in view with that startling shadow-like silence that is as much part of an animal's defence as antler, fang or claw.

Large brown liquid eyes gazed at tiny black ones, yet elk and bear took no notice of each other. They were too intent on something else. The elk paced on a little way and swung into the wind, massive head raised, gaping nostrils dilating, ugly lip curling: then he turned about again and vanished *downwind* in a shambling trot, his stately antlers brushing the low-hanging branches.

This was too much for "Honeypaw." He left his beloved fruit and padded away in the same direction. The wind, faithful Ariel of the wild, had brought its news, and it was quite clear what had

happened. The Soviet shelling had set the forest on fire and the wind was fanning it with glee.

Working across-wind, the sergeant tried to discover the extent of the fire in order to get round its flank, and as he made his way more and more animals passed him, fleeing in panic from something which, though they might never have encountered it before, they recognised instinctively; and in face of this primeval terror of fire even their fear of man, and of each other, was forgotten.

Hares crippled over the soft star-moss; foxes passed them unheeding; in the trees a family of squirrels vaulted from bough to bough, swearing and scolding; a great bird followed them, and once it paused to gaze about with glaring eyes that blazed like fire itself: it was an eagle-owl that had damaged its wing.

"I never knew there were so many animals in all the forest," Isomaa went on. "There was even a lynx I came across, sneaking through a gully. I couldn't resist taking a shot at him, but I missed.

"I hadn't gone far when I realised the fire was spreading too rapidly for me to outflank it. The air was already hot with it, and presently I could hear the roaring and crackling of it, and suddenly there came in sight a wall of flame away through the trees. If you've never seen a forest fire you can't imagine what it's like to see those great flames just burning up trees and bushes as if they were tinder. A forest fire will sometimes hang about for days on end until it gets a favourable wind, then it's off like a horse given its head. I turned tail.

"Two more elk passed me, a cow and her calf. There are hundreds of elk in those Russian border forests. Our company alone shot over a hundred in a year, and good meat they are too.

"I saw a wolverine as well, a shaggy brown devil he is, as bad as the lynx. Up in Lapland, if a wolverine's discovered the Lapps sound the glutton-alarm and won't rest till he's killed. He'll leap at a reindeer's throat and hang on till it drops.

"Another elk; more foxes; hares; a pair of pine martens. I'd've given something for the fur I saw that day. One animal would scarcely pass out of sight than another would appear.

"Presently I approached a lake, but when I ran down through the reeds, I saw that I was on a tongue of land and likely to be cut off by the fire.

"It was here that I saw the most extraordinary thing of all. There was no retreat, but the animals had not hesitated; a tiny island lay a stone's throw from the shore. An elk and her calf were swimming towards it; others had already reached it. Among the lilies at the edge of the island a bull-elk was standing, hock-deep in the water, probably the same bull I had seen earlier on. Thirty yards from him was 'Honey-paw.'

"I lay on the beach watching them through my fieldglasses. It

was the weirdest thing I ever hope to see. I counted seven different kinds of animal, all on a few square yards of refuge and all of them deadly enemies normally, yet now they were so afraid of the fire they forgot to fear each other. It was like the story of the Ark, only this time it was fire they had fled from instead of flood.

"I decided to wait there, for if I went any farther I would bump into the Russians. If the fire came too close I would join the animals."

All through the white northern night Sergeant Isomaa waited, cut off by the fire on the one hand and the Red Army on the other, and in the strangest company a man could find.

Towards sunrise the sergeant noticed that the stippled pattern of the lake's surface had changed: the wind, the only master the fire acknowledged, was backing. It was obvious that the fire was diminishing. The terror was over.

The animals had sensed the change at once. They wasted no time in quitting that uneasy truce, for once the common terror of fire had passed they would soon grow aware of each other again. The cow elk and her calf were the first to go, swimming strongly for the farther shore. The bull followed them.

"But I didn't wait to see any more natural history," said Kaarlo Isomaa. Having escaped the fire, he had no desire to fall into the frying-pan of the Red Army and so, skirting the blackened, reeking part of the forest, where flames still fluttered, he resumed his lonely one-man retreat and eventually reached his base.

Two months later he was fighting his former allies who were devastating Lapland in their long retreat through the fells to Norway. Nowadays he is plain Herra Kaarlo Isomaa, earning forty pounds a month as foreman of a sawmill in Aavasaksa, just south of the Arctic Circle.

II. THE SILENT REVOLT

LIVING mainly in the country as a boy, many wild creatures inevitably came my way, some by chance, others by design, and at one time or another I must have had a veritable Noah's Ark in miniature: marshland newts with vivid crests, mild grass snakes, jackdaws fallen from their nests, rat-hunting hedgehogs, falcons stolen from eyries down the coast, even an ottercub for a few brief weeks; but of all this array, the creature I remember most keenly was a wild goose which I shot and wounded and I tell its story here because I think it has a special interest for the study of animals.

Shivering in the barrel which, several hours ago, I had sunk in the gleaming sand, I waited for the floodtide to drive the brent geese towards me. Far out, where the sea bickered along the banks, they fed eagerly, black and small in the distance, retreating reluctantly before the tide, their necks bent and swinging as they fed. Then suddenly,

as if by common consent, they rose and flew further in, small dark geese, stumpy in flight, white-rumped, black-backed, with strong quick wings that had borne them out of Greenland.

Crouched in my ambush, I tensed my trembling body and clutched my gun, but relaxed once more as the geese came down again, a hundred yards away. Surely next time . . . I *willed* them to rise : Now ; now. I smiled at myself and settled down grimly to another half hour's vigil. At least I was determined not to fail through lack of patience, the first requisite of the hunter.

Curlews wailed across the desolate shore and beat in on arched, sprung wings within easy range. If only they were geese. Hundreds of oystercatchers followed them, uttering sweet, ringing cries. Neat grey plover bobbed past, their liquid *too-luie* of greeting one of the loveliest notes of the estuary. Lament of redshank, whistle of plover, bark of tall godwit, purr of legions of dunlin, the whole shore was a ringing chorus.

The autumn afternoon faded and a chill crept into the salt air. I shivered and wondered what was for tea—if it had not irately been cleared away by the time I got back.

Would the geese never rise ; would the tide never drive them in ? But yard by slow yard the sea was rolling in and the geese shifted before it. All at once the vigil was over : up rose the pack of geese, crying their assertive metallic note and sped further in (Oh make them come this way !).

Tight-knit, swift, they came obliquely past the ambush, swerving and crying in warning as, too late, they saw it. The gun roared once, twice. A scattering of swift bodies, rush of panicking wings, and with a wild crying they reformed and sped away, all but one of them who now fluttered and struggled along the sands that darkly mirrored the waning light.

Out I scrambled, cursing myself for missing my first shot and fearful lest I should now be unable to retrieve even this cripple. However, the wounded gander could not get far and, exhausted, waited with watchful eyes for his enemy.

How to kill it ? I glanced irresolutely up the beach, wondering whether I could find a handy stick. But there was nothing but pieces of cork and bottles and grape-fruit skins.

As I hesitated, I was caught by a sudden idea that set me glowing with excitement : of course, a live decoy ! I almost shouted with delight. This was an idea I had always thought about and never been able to carry out.

I laid down my gun, took off my coat and, holding it before me, advanced on the stricken gander . . .

Crudely the wing mended. My own patience, the help of my younger brother whose ambition was to become a veterinary surgeon,

together with the natural toughness of the gander, combined to heal it, though it set badly, giving the brent a queer lopsided look, and would never be of any use again.

After an inevitable period of moping, the gander began to pick up and take an interest in his surroundings. In a strange world the boy who fed and tended him was his only protection; and, like a bird out of some legend, he followed me round yard and shippon and lived in state in a basket in a corner of the low-beamed, flagged kitchen.

Towards the end of winter, when the wing had quite healed, I decided to put the gander to the test as a decoy and began to take him on my expeditions along the lonely coast.

Now wild geese are the wariest of birds: they set sentinels, go to extremes of caution, and prefer to wait hungry awhile rather than run any risks: every man's hand is against them, and they know it. But when the first pack of brent geese came in swift flight along the margin of the estuary, they turned without hesitation at the sound of the familiar double-note in the grass.

'Agh-uk, agh-uk,' the crippled gander cried, overjoyed at this encounter. 'Agh-uk, agh-uk.'

Down veered the pack, crying in answer, and as the gun thundered out, one barrel after the other, they scattered again in an upward surge of wings like some giant blue-black flower split asunder.

Panic-stricken, the decoy gander tried to fly, then, failing, crouched silent and terrified in the grass. Beyond him lay one of his fellows whom he had so lately welcomed, and whose feathers still floated down limply.

Many geese used to come to that coast in winter, feeding by day, following the tide or retreating before it; and being as familiar with the habits of wild creatures as with those of men, I would take my decoy out as often as I could: high tide was no use, I knew the geese would be swimming well out from shore, waiting for low water to let them start their eager feeding again.

I varied my beat and, laden with gun and spade and with the decoy in a cat-basket on my back, I would range for miles along shore and estuary. Often did the eager cry of the gander allay the suspicions of passing geese; though sometimes they would suspect danger and would sheer off; at other times down they would come to the treacherous cry.

But this did not continue for long. Evidently behind those alert eyes the small goose-brain was at work. No bird is wiser than the goose, unless it is the raven. Gradually the crippled gander must have begun to associate things with one another. Instinctively he cried when he knew his fellows were approaching: but though his cry brought them down, this was followed immediately by the terrifying roar of the gun which resulted, if not in the death of some

of them, at least in their panic-stricken dispersal, and he would be alone again.

One morning, squatting in a freshly dug hide, I tensely watched a small pack of geese approaching. I waited for the summoning call : it did not come. The gander was mute. The pack passed swiftly overhead, out of range, and alighted a quarter of a mile away.

I was puzzled : this was contrary to nature : it was almost as if the tide had failed to turn at the appointed time or the sun had failed to sink. But when the same stubborn silence followed on other occasions, when packs of geese passed along the beach unheralded by the hump-winged gander, though their swift flight was marked just as eagerly by the steady gleaming eyes, then I slowly realised it was all a deliberate refusal to continue the betrayal.

Recovered from my chagrin at this silent revolt, I was filled with wonder and admiration at such animal reasoning.

In any case, little more shooting would have been possible, for the geese were beginning to move north, back to their arctic nesting grounds : but the brent were always late departing and many still lingered in the warm sunshine of that April : sometimes a pack would fly over as the cuckoo was calling, roused to ecstasy by the onset of warmth in the spinneys beyond the level meadows, and it was as if winter and summer were meeting.

Always restive, spring made the gander even more desperate, and often, knowing that his fellows were passing over, he tried to raise his stricken wing and fly with them. But it was no use, he was chained to earth.

He began to mope and grow out of condition, just as when I first captured him, for he knew well enough the wild geese were returning northward. I let him wander at will, cropping the rich *zostera* weed at the tide's fringe, and sometimes I would follow him, taking my field-glasses now instead of a gun.

One evening, while I lay hidden in the rabbit-infested sand dunes and the gander fed some seventy or eighty yards away, we heard again the familiar ringing cry : these surely were the last geese of the season, for it was several days since any others had flown over : they flew in from the south-west and began to feed in the pools and rivulets.

Eagerly the gander watched, then approached : without me I suppose he was not afraid of the old frightening association : cry—geese—gun—loneliness again. The wild geese were aware of him. I saw first one, then another look up from feeding, until a score of alert heads stared in his direction. He began to feed at the flank of the pack.

They would have none of him. Nobody can tell the exact mental

processes of wild creatures. The word *instinct* conceals a world of mysteries. The wild geese *knew*: they knew that the gander was one of them and yet not one of them. He bore the taint of Man; and—greatest of sins—he was a cripple. They drove him away with snaking necks and menacing beaks.

Several times he approached them; again and again they drove him vehemently away and he took refuge in the scrub of the dunes. In a little while the pack rose and flighted away into the gathering dusk.

I made my way home through the whispering haulms of teazels, but the gander did not return. My brother and I searched for a long time by the light of lanterns without finding any sign of him.

Next day I came across his bedraggled remains near the tide fringe. Fox or otter had run him down, probably the bitch otter who had her holt in the banks of a stream three fields distant. She had two ravenous cubs to feed and anything that came her way was fair game.

Often afterwards I was sorry that I had ever wounded that wild goose and used him as a decoy, for, within his own small compass, the mental fret he went through was probably far worse than his physical hurt; yet I suppose, when we are young, many things which would otherwise appear callous are done simply because we are so intensely interested in life—even though, paradoxical as it may seem, we do our utmost at times to destroy it.

A. C. JENKINS

"THE MONTH" FORWARDING SCHEME

Once more we appeal to our readers to remember those in lonely foreign missions, who have given up home and country to follow our Lord's explicit command "go and teach all nations". The pathetic appeals we have before us, from such missionaries, asking if we can secure for them a regular copy of *THE MONTH* would touch the heart of any who read them. Space does not permit our printing even extracts in this number, but we hope to do so shortly. What better way could Christmas be celebrated than by giving a subscription for *THE MONTH* to be sent to one of these lonely missions? The subscription is £1 for a year. Those who cannot give this might be willing to re-mail their own copy to a missionary.

All communications to: The Hon. Secretary, 114 Mount Street, London, W.1, enclosing a stamped addressed envelope. Please write Names and Addresses in BLOCK Capitals.

ARGENTINE IMPRESSIONS

II

CÓRDOBA is the ancient city of the Argentine, with a history going back for well nigh four hundred years. It is a city of churches, some of them Spanish colonial in style and ornamentation, and these have lovely altar pieces put together by Indian craftsmen. It has been the centre of great missionary enterprises, as can still be seen by the church of the Compañía in the city itself, and by extensive Jesuit settlements, as at Santa Catalina and Alta Gracia. It has preserved a cultural tradition in its schools and university, which date from those missionary times. Indeed, the good people of Córdoba affect to look upon, even to look down upon, the *Porteños*, or folk of Buenos Aires, as culturally their inferiors.

Not that this claim goes uncontested. For the *Porteños* do not hesitate to answer that Buenos Aires is an older foundation than Córdoba. Was it not—they argue—the gallant Pedro de Mendoza who set sail from Spain in 1535 with eleven ships and more than a thousand men, with a royal commission to establish three cities on the shores of what, only nine years previously, Sebastian Cabot had christened *El Río de la Plata*, the River of the Silver? That broad expanse of water—so he trusted—would lead to the domains of “The White King,” of whose opulence he had heard strange stories from the Indians. And was it not too on the site of present-day Buenos Aires that the Spanish Captain-General traced out his primitive encampment of mud huts thatched with reeds—modest ancestor of what to-day is a city of three million inhabitants? And was it not these venturesome Spaniards who gave it the title of *Buenos Aires*, not because of any fair breezes or fortunate climate, but because of their seamen’s devotion to the *Virgen María de los Buenos Vientos*, Our Lady of Favourable Winds?

Thus, nothing daunted, the people of Córdoba have their answer handy. Yes, but what happened to these settlers? Is it not correct that they could not remain along the banks of the *Río de la Plata*? That, after many disasters, a poor remnant, harried by Indians and worn out by hunger and fatigue, had to sail for days and nights up the rivers Paraná and Paraguay to take refuge in the stockaded fort of *Santa María de Asunción*, and that Asunción was the capital of the River Plate for eighty years? And, finally, that Buenos Aires was not really founded until Juan de Garay, in 1580, sailed Southwards from Asunción with sixty Spaniards and two hundred Guarani families to establish—the *Porteños* would write the word “re-establish”—Buenos Aires?

When cities dispute their ancient lineage it is wisest to be silent. In this discussion each of the disputants has a measure of the truth. Mendoza did set up his camp lines on part of what is now Buenos Aires. But nothing was left of his settlement and Juan de Garay had to make a completely new start. And Córdoba is junior to Mendoza and senior to de Garay. However, senior to both Córdoba and Garay's second Buenos Aires are one or two cities in the Argentine's North West. It requires an effort, on the part of a European, to look at the Argentine, historically at least, the right side up. To us Buenos Aires is naturally its head—a large and important, I have heard it called a "swollen" head. We might imagine that the Argentine developed outwards from Buenos Aires and that it was through the stretches of the Silver River that the Europeans penetrated into Argentina. If we leave aside the disastrous expedition of Mendoza, the Spaniards descended upon Argentina from the north and west, to be a little more precise, from the north-west, out of what to-day is called Bolivia but then was Upper Peru.

In 1542, a veteran from many wars, Diego de Rojas led two hundred Spaniards, with a few horses and a number of Indian attendants, down the steep mountain passes from Peru into the wooded valleys and the plains around Tucumán. For four years this company of adventurers marched and camped, continually shifting its ground and enduring extremes of hunger and fatigue in its search for the fabled city of "Trapelanda," the capital of yet another El Dorado that was said to lie beyond the southern borders of the ancient Inca kingdom. A handful of settlements were established—one of them with the name of *Londres* to commemorate the marriage of King Philip with Mary of England—but all were destroyed by Indians. De Rojas was slain, and the remnants of his company struggled northwards to Peru.

A fresh expedition went southwards in 1547. This time it clashed, not with Indians but with another body of Spanish soldiers who were on the march westwards from Paraguay towards Chile. This second group prevailed, and for some sixteen years the settlers in the region of Tucumán—they were from Peru—had to submit to Governors imposed upon them by the Spanish Captain-General of Chile. The seat of Government was first in Santiago del Estero, which is thus the oldest city of the Argentine, and afterwards in Salta, further to the north, and under the shadows of the mountains of Upper Peru. However, in 1563, King Philip II intervened. He decreed that the province of Tucumán should be separated from Chile and placed under the *Audiencia* or Royal Council of Charcas, that had been set up, in 1559, in the city of Chuquisaca, which the Spaniards called *La Plata*, from the silver mines in the neighbourhood.

Santiago del Estero had been established, in 1553, by a doughty

warrior, Francisco de Aguirre, who brooked no authority but his own. He set up a cannon on his fortified house, exacting unquestioning obedience from Spaniard and Indian alike. His settlement, alone, survived a widespread and dangerous Indian rebellion in 1561. Three years afterwards, he sent a company northwards to found the city of *San Miguel de Tucumán*, somewhat to the south of the present town of Tucumán. In 1573, the Spaniards moved further southwards, when Jerónimo de Cabrera laid the foundations of the city of Córdoba.

Conditions were now more settled. The province of Tucumán was consolidated and widened by the establishment of La Rioja (1591) in the far west, and of Jujuy (1593) on the road to Upper Peru.

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History has brought me down from Tucumán to Córdoba, An aeroplane of the Argentine line, Z.O.N.D.A., took me in the reverse direction from the Córdoba airport, some distance outside the city, to the airport of Tucumán, which is almost inside the town itself. The journey can be done by train but, done that way it occupies fourteen hours—that is, if you are fortunate. And they say that the dust and salt deposit which the traveller gathers on that journey make it both tiresome and unpleasant. The Z.O.N.D.A. service is a new one. It commenced in 1946 when an Argentine company took over the equipment of the American Panagra which had been operating air lines inside Argentina for a number of years. Z.O.N.D.A. still uses American planes—the D.C.3—and prides itself, at least secretly, on being about as American as was Panagra. It holds on definitely to United States methods, giving you a meal aboard in the North American manner, not that of Argentina. The pilots are good; most of them have seen service with the Argentine Air Force, and some flew with the R.A.F. during the war. One of the two pilots I came across on the return flight, this time from Córdoba to Mendoza, was a young Anglo-Argentine, Juan Miles, who had served for five years with the R.A.F., for some portion of the time in the Far East. The airfields are, for the most part, actual fields, constructed of beaten earth, save that at Mendoza which is used by international airlines. On a dry day, with a wind blowing, a landing plane raises a young hurricane of dust which makes you take shelter inside the waiting room of the airport. However, much of the Argentine is so flat that a skilful pilot could make a landing almost anywhere, at the risk of disturbing cattle or hitting a eucalyptus tree.

From Córdoba you fly over the sternly undulating hills of the Sierras. Stern, because the earth is russet or red and is covered with tough shrubbery or squat trees. The lesser Sierras are not high, so that you fly quite low and can make out the details of the landscape. Here are villages and villas, for this is the holiday region of the

Argentine, much visited by such as do not go down to the sea, as at Mar del Plata ; or who cannot venture so far afield as the Lake District on the borders of South West Argentine and Chile. Here are holiday estates and settlements, with shaded terraces and patios, with white painted roofs and walls that glisten upwards through the sunny atmosphere ; here are pools and lakes.

This undulating region presently gives way to a bare and almost sinister wilderness—the wide expanse of the Salt Area, barren and deserted—a desert of whitish brown, looking like a glacier formation but of salt, not ice. Here and there a road winds over this belt of empty silence. No vegetation can be discovered, there is no habitation.

Beyond the salt area you touch down at the airport of Santiago del Estero, too far away from the town to leave any but the most fleeting of impressions. But Santiago del Estero is the oldest city of the Argentine, and it was for long the centre of the episcopal see of the province of Tucumán. Its cathedral, the mother church of this large area, was begun in 1570. Its first edition, of one single nave, was not grand enough for the bishop, Francisco de Victoria, who arrived in 1581, and soon the effects of the local salt mines were visible on the interior walls. A second building was constructed, and “very sumptuous” it was, reported de Salcedo, Canon of the cathedral. In fact, in his opinion, there was no building to compare with it throughout the entire province. But—alas—fire destroyed the major portion in 1621, and the restored cathedral suffered severely from floods when the waters of the Río Dulce overflowed their banks and swirled through the streets and houses of the city. A third Cathedral had a longer lease of life, from 1677 to 1852, though it was badly shaken by the earthquake of 1817. The north-west parts of the Argentine suffer at times from these dreadful visitations.

And so to Tucumán. The name is Indian, though there is no agreement as to its significance. It is a provincial town that has grown rapidly ; the population was 35,000 in 1895 ; it is more than 110,000 now. It is situated almost at the north-west corner of the vast plain of the Pampas, that stretches many hundreds of miles, with scarcely a break or interruption, towards Buenos Aires. Go some little way up the mountains which run north and south to the west of the city, and the vast plain is there before your eyes, till it melts into the horizon. It is a fertile region, well watered, producing wheat and maize and lucerne, and sub-tropical as to its flowers and fruit and trees.

To one side of the town rise the first ranges of the Sierra of Aconquija. In the early morning light they are richly flushed with a range of colouring from bright pink to the dull, deep red of sandstone. Above the rough and ragged trees on the lower slopes the crest of the mountains lies clear and sharp. On the one full day

I spent there I was taken out along the road to these hills. You pass through the outer suburbs, very similar to those of other cities in the Argentine such as Rosario or Mendoza, save for the brighter flowering trees in parks and gardens. It was still winter, a day in late August, for spring does not come officially to the Argentine until September the 21st. Yet, the jacaranda trees were in blossom—a lovely heliotrope—and there were large orchards of orange and lemon trees, the fruit hanging heavy and gleaming among the dark foliage. “Like golden lamps in a green night”—the old line had to recur to one—and it is a most apt description, except that the shade of the gold varies from rose gold to the palest yellow. Tucumán is in the near tropics, with a latitude of twenty-six or twenty-seven degrees. Its climate is variable and, for the European, difficult.

Tucumán is an odd mixture of poverty and plenty. Before you leave the city, houses—properly speaking—come to an end and are succeeded, along the road, by shacks and shanties pieced together from bricks and beams and rags. Each of these hovels is the habitation of some individual or family that has squatted on the town's outskirts. How much of this is the outcome of unavoidable distress, and how much is due—as you will be assured—to the lazy and feckless character of these people, who have a strong admixture of Indian blood, the casual visitor cannot, of course, venture to decide. In a land as fertile and rich in natural resources as is the Argentine such poverty ought not to exist. In the surrounding country, too, is much destitution; though here again you will be presented with the double explanation. Salt mines, incidentally, provide considerable employment.

Despite its long distance from Buenos Aires and Córdoba, Tucumán boasts an intellectual life of its own. It has a university, with chairs of physics, chemistry, mathematics and natural science, a school of pharmacy, and an experimental school for agriculture. It is a token of its interest in other languages and traditions that it has an Institute of English Culture and a branch of the *Alliance Française*. At the Tucumán airport I was met by what appeared to be a delegation. It consisted of a young Frenchman, the secretary of the *Alliance*, a French priest of the Fathers of the Sacred Heart who have schools—and important ones—in several Argentine cities, the president of the *Alliance*, a Creole, speaking French and Spanish, and the president of the English Institute who spoke no French nor English but Spanish only; the director of the Institute, an Englishman, arrived a few minutes later. I gave lectures in both institutes, in the appropriate language: the English lecture in a patio within the building but open to the sub-tropical winter air, that in French in the house of the *Alliance*. It was honoured by the presence of the Bishop of Tucumán, Mgr. Barrere, Argentine by birth but French by origin and education, a vigorous prelate now in his eighty-second year.

The province and city of Tucumán have a prominent place, not only as the first Argentine area of Spanish settlement, but also in the creation of an independent Republic. In the course of the Napoleonic wars Spain was invaded by the French, and the Spanish peninsula became a field of battle. Spain's colonies in South America began to break away. In Buenos Aires an independent Government was set up, and it claimed authority over the whole Viceroyalty of the River Plate. An army proceeded from Buenos Aires to the interior. It captured Córdoba, and all the cities of Argentine foundation gave their allegiance to the new Government. Paraguay refused, as did Montevideo, in the Banda Oriental, now Uruguay. The army marched further northwards, through Tucumán and Salta; it climbed to the lofty uplands of Upper Peru and defeated the Spanish Royalist troops at Suipacha.

When Ferdinand VII returned to Spain in 1814, he made serious efforts to reassert his authority in South America. A ten years' war was the consequence of this determination. The outbreak in 1820 of another revolution in Spain made the issue of the struggle quite certain for the peoples of South America. Fighting went on north of Tucumán, especially in the long valley between Tucumán and Jujuy, through which, ever since the southern descent of the Incas, had passed trading caravans and armies. The struggle was ding dong; fortunes fluctuated alternately. The Royalists would come down from Peru, gain a victory or two, and find it impossible to consolidate those victories. Or the Republicans from the south would invade Peru, only to be driven back. The opposing forces advanced and retreated along the valley. But even before this ten years' war began there had been considerable fighting around and in Tucumán. In 1812 General Belgrano—a name famous in Argentine history—took over command of the army on this north-west frontier. A Royalist force came southwards from Upper Peru. Belgrano retreated to Tucumán, where he resolved to give battle, ignoring the orders that had come from Buenos Aires bidding him retire further south to Córdoba. He was supported by the mounted *gauchos* of the district as well as by the citizens of Tucumán. On September the 24th, the feast day of *La Virgen de Merced*, there was fought a fierce and costly battle in the streets of Tucumán. The result was a triumph, and the Royalists were pursued as far as Salta. Shortly afterwards Belgrano invaded Peru, only to lose battles at Vilcapugio and Ayohuma and to be compelled to retreat again as far south as Tucumán.

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This must suffice for Tucumán, that far outpost of Argentine cities in the north west. From Tucumán airport I waited for the plane from Jujuy and Salta, that was to take me as far as Córdoba. From

Córdoba to Tucumán the passage had been bumpy. On the way back it was delightfully smooth, with scarcely a bump of any sort to remind one of the wind and clouds. And so I was wafted across the dreary salt regions and the russet Córdoba sierras, to alight at Córdoba airport and there wait for the best part of two hours for the plane from Buenos Aires that would carry me to Mendoza.

Argentine planes fly very low. They told me that, on the flight from Buenos Aires to Córdoba they had not risen above two thousand feet; and even from Córdoba to Tucumán we had scarcely soared above four thousand. However, between Córdoba and Mendoza they have to change their tactics. For, in the first place, you have to cross the larger Sierras, and then you must fly round some of the mountains that stand out as sentinels before the mighty ranges of the Andes. After two hours or so, and rounding one of these peaks, you come to San Juan, lying in the plain beneath the shadow of the Andes. This is a dry and hard countryside, subject every now and then to violent earth disturbances. San Juan was badly devastated by an earthquake in 1944, when more than a thousand people were killed and a large part of the town was severely shaken. In the bishop's palace at Mendoza, the next morning, I was shown an album of photographs taken after the earthquake, and they were indeed a fearsome record of the damage and human tragedy of this grim event.

Both before the landing at San Juan, and during the half hour's flight between San Juan and Mendoza, there was a magnificent view of the Andes, range behind range, the further peaks soaring majestically into the stormy clouds. The Andes run along the west side of Latin America like a stiff backbone for more than two thousand miles, from the southern tip of the Continent north to Peru. They include some of the highest mountains, and some of the most difficult weather conditions, in the world. Shortly before I left London for the Argentine one British plane was lost crossing the Andes, and up to the time of writing it had not been recovered. It was a tribute to the difficulties of this arduous region that, when I landed at Mendoza airport, there stood on the runway a large American plane—a D.C.6—bound for Santiago but unable to go further because of air conditions over the Andes.

On the final lap of the journey few people remained in the aeroplane. I was near the back and thus was able to get out of it first, as soon as it landed at the airport. Straight ahead of me was a group of three persons: the first, a tall priest, who turned out to be the Superior of the Jesuit residence in the city; the second, equally tall, an Englishman, Mr. Herbert Gibson, president and patron of the local English Institute—a Catholic, of course, though I fancy he was a convert, with a charming Irish wife; the third, sandwiched between them, a figure half their height, Mr. Foster, once a Free Church minister,

now the efficient director of a very efficient English Institute, which had on its books well over a thousand students of English language and literature. This in a town seven hundred miles removed from Buenos Aires, and with only a handful of English in it, was a remarkable achievement. I much appreciated the courtesy of all three of them which had brought them out to the airport to meet me.

What I must confess I appreciated rather less, after five to six hours in the air, was the series of jobs they very quietly passed on to me. First of all, a visit to a newspaper office. Mendoza possesses one of the best-known newspapers in the Argentine, outside of Buenos Aires. And what endears it to the British in the Argentine is the fact that it was genuinely on the side of the Allies throughout the war. When I was taken to the editor's sanctum and had a talk with him, I noticed—and indeed was proudly shown—a wooden figure of Mr. Churchill on the editorial table and a large picture of Mr. Churchill on one of the walls. I understood that they had occupied their positions all the time from 1939 till to-day. The paper in question was *Los Andes*, and while I record the kindness of its editor I must confess that his kindness complicated my short stay of three nights in Mendoza. For he wanted, in the first instance, my impressions of the Argentine. They were easily collected and handed over : my appreciation of much courtesy and friendliness from a naturally friendly people, and a word or two on the obvious resources of the country, with now and then a slight artistic touch—here the jacaranda blossom at Tucumán and orange and lemon trees came in very handy—and the hint of my quite serious hope that a rapprochement between the English-speaking and Spanish-speaking peoples of the world would have a considerable influence on world affairs and provide a healthy safeguard for world peace. So far, so simple. But he wanted more—a résumé, to the tune of nearly 2,000 words, of the English lecture on "Education in England," which I was due to deliver at the University of Mendoza the following evening ; and the entire text of a second lecture, that was to be given in French, the night afterwards, on "The situation of the Catholic Church in Britain." Need I say I had neither the résumé nor the lecture text with me? And must I say that he got both of them, put together at a speed which seemed to me a trifle hectic, before I left a particularly hospitable city. That same evening of my arrival there was a "party," at which I was able to meet the bishop, Mgr. Buteler, who also presided at the second of my two lectures. I felt that somehow there was an "e" too many in his Lordship's name, and ventured to tell him so. He agreed. His brother and himself, both bishops, are descendants of Irish immigrants to the Argentine.

The name "Mendoza" has nothing to do with Pedro de Mendoza, who came with the king's commission to establish cities along the River Plate. For the city was colonised from the west in 1561, when Pedro de Castilli marched eastward from Chile and gave to the new

settlement the title of his Captain-General, Hurtado de Mendoza. Other towns were soon founded in the district : San Juan, in 1562, San Luis, in 1596. The whole of this area remained dependent upon Chile until 1776 and it was known as *Cuyo*.

There is little that is ancient in Mendoza. It had a history of Jesuit, Dominican and Franciscan missionary efforts. The earliest Dominicans were active there, as long ago as 1563. The founders of the city set aside a piece of land on which the Franciscans might build a church and friary. A century went by, and then, in 1687, the Franciscans did establish an *hospitium*, dependent upon their province in Chile. Thirty years subsequently, the *hospitium* was raised to the status of a *conventus*, and given the title of Blessed Francis Solano, who was actually canonized nine years after this change of dignity of the Franciscan house. When the Society of Jesus was expelled by royal decree from His Spanish Majesty's dominions in the New World, the Franciscans were allowed to take over the church of the Jesuits in Mendoza, while they relinquished their own friary to the town authorities.

But the old Jesuit church which later became the Franciscan church of San Francisco does not survive, and very little indeed has survived in Mendoza from earlier times. In 1861 there occurred a terrible earthquake. It began at half-past eight in the evening with an undulating movement of shakes and shocks from north-west to south-east. Houses collapsed like tumbling cards ; gas pipes snapped ; fires sprang up ; soon the entire city was ablaze. The banks of irrigation channels were burst and waters poured into the town, to add to the confusion and death without checking the fire. Shocks continued throughout the two following days, and the earth remained sensitive and dangerous for three months afterwards. The city of Mendoza was to all intents and purposes destroyed, and 10,000 persons at least were killed.

The modern town is built some distance away from the site of the older city. It is new, of course, and large, constructed round a longer axis, the Boulevard San Martín, which has a length of seven kilometres. The city is approached from every side by avenues of trees, flanking roads. I saw them in winter, when they were "bare ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang." In spring, they must be an approach of loveliness.

The district, to one half of the Río Mendoza valley, is a tribute to the activity and ingenuity of men. They have made a land of beauty and fruitfulness from a dreary and stony waste. The contrast is remarkable between the developed portion and the valley further northwards on the way to San Juan, where it is a wilderness, waiting for irrigation. For irrigation is the solution, and it appears that at the moment no sufficient water supply is available for the opening up of the whole region. The contrast is striking indeed between this

arid stone-choked section and the fields of vine and olive-trees and fruit of almost every kind. An earthly paradise meets a desert on the banks of the Río Mendoza. Mendoza is the Argentine's best-known and most fertile centre for fruit and wine.

To the west of the city run some of the forward ranges of the Andes. Seen from the city they are impressive, though you can see only smaller ridges. But go a short distance into the mountains, as I was able to do on a Saturday morning, after it had rained all the night and snowed along the mountains, and you will learn something of the mystery and magic of that immense mountain range. Snow on the first ridges of the Eastern Andes is, apparently, a rare sight; so that morning a procession of cars went into the mountains to admire the effects of this unwonted visitation. From Potrerillos, some distance into the hills and along the newer road they are constructing to connect the Argentine with Chile, the view was indeed magnificent. Not that the mountains were different from other mountains, though the Andes, one is told, provide the most amazing contrasts in light and colour, nor that the snow was whiter or brighter than snow in other continents. What was unique was the vision of snow-crested and snow-powdered mountains against a background of startlingly blue, provocatively blue, sky. Not a line or wisp of cloud, only a deep, almost a dark, blue. It was midwinter against the velvet of a midsummer heaven—a contrast more violent and withal more wonderful than our temperate regions can know.

But, before I leave Mendoza, I must add a few words about the part which Mendoza played in the emergence of the Argentine as an independent Republic. This part was thrust upon it by a far-seeing leader who has come to be recognized as the Father of the Argentine State. His name was José de San Martín. Though born in the Argentine, he had served for twenty years as an officer in the Spanish army, and he sailed back to South America in March, 1812, on the ship, *George Canning*. He raised and trained an Argentine army at Tucumán; he then handed over his command and asked to be made Governor of *Cuyo*, the area which spread eastwards and northwards from Mendoza. He had come to the conclusion that the ding-dong war between the Argentine forces and the Royalists in Upper Peru would lead to nothing. Neither side was strong enough to advance into and remain in the territory of the other. Peru, he decided, would have to be invaded from the sea.

In October, 1814, one month after San Martín had installed himself as Governor of *Cuyo* in Mendoza, the Spanish Royalists invaded Chile from Peru, and the Chilean Republic fell before their advance. San Martín waited for two years before he took action; in that period he trained a force of 4,000 men. At the close of 1816 he requisitioned from the *Cuyanos* 13,000 mules. It was impossible to cross the Andes during the winter. So, just before midsummer, i.e. in January, 1817,

he set out with 4,000 fighting men and marched over the mountains by the two passes of Uspallata and Los Patos, each of them 12,000 feet above sea level. Three small detachments took more distant routes. His forces defeated the Royalists at Chacabuco and he entered Santiago, the capital of Chile, on February the 17th.

He then recrossed the mountains and travelled to Buenos Aires, to ask for naval assistance in the Pacific ; returned to Chile to discover that the Royalists had won victories in the south, and himself to lose a battle at Cancha Rayada, but to gain a decisive triumph at Maipú. A fleet was improvised, and put under the command of Cochrane, an experienced English or Irish sailor ; within three years it drove the Spanish flag from the Pacific. It was not until August, 1820, that San Martín's small army sailed northwards along the coast towards Peru, convoyed and protected by Cochrane's navy. But that voyage, which led to the final South American victories over the Spanish troops, and to the meeting of San Martín from the Argentine with Bolívar from Venezuela, has taken us far away from Mendoza.

I return to it for a moment in a memory of the Sunday morning when the Buenos Aires train, known as *El Cuyano*, carried me out of Mendoza station at 7.20 a.m. It was still dark, and a full moon shone with startling brightness low over the mountain ranges behind the town. Slowly it sank beyond the skyline and lighted up the mountains with a gleam of pale green passing through amber into the palest saffron. The sky grew lighter, the colours faded to a ghostly whiteness as the train drew out into the long flat silence of the Pampas.

JOHN MURRAY

SHORT NOTICE

From America comes **Catholic Library Practice** (University of Portland Press, Oregon. 1947. Pp. 244, paper-backed. Price not stated.) It is edited by Brother David Martin, C.S.C., Librarian of the University of Portland. The book consists of a series of twenty papers on various aspects of librarianship. The contributors are either librarians or lecturers in librarianship, twelve women (ten of whom are nuns) and seven men (of whom only one is a layman). It is intended for librarians, and for them it will provide many constructive ideas. We doubt, however, whether Catholics who work our English Public Libraries would be able to adopt the suggestions offered. Librarians of our Seminaries and in our Secondary Schools would find some useful help in the matter of administration and book selection. The general reader, too, will find it interesting. The booklover, for example, will appreciate the paper "Early Contributions to Librarianship"; those engaged in the apostolate of reading will learn some practical facts about a "Diocesan Bookshop and Library", and perhaps will sigh for a similar activity in England. Indeed the whole book is a testimony to fine work being done by American Catholics in their own country for the encouragement of good reading.

MISCELLANEA

I. CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL NOTES

SOME POLISH CHRISTMAS CAROLS

IT is a great pity that the Polish Christmas carols are not better known. I should think that those who are interested in music and Christmas carols are acquainted with the sad, delicate air of "Lully, dear Jesus", since Chopin used a modified form of this melody in his B minor Scherzo. But the Polish Christmas carols are not generally known or sung. The Oxford Carol Book does not appear to have a single Polish Christmas carol, unless Poland can claim :

"Torches ! torches ! run with torches !"

But perhaps Austria must have the credit of this delightful carol—as well as others more famous.

"Torches !" is very like a Polish Christmas carol ; it is spirited, warm-hearted and dramatic, while keeping the dignity of a sacred theme : and this is typical of the Polish carols.

Do you remember ? Torches ! torches !
Torches, torches, run with torches
All the way to Bethlehem !
Christ is born and now lies sleeping,
Come and sing your song to Him !

Ah, ro-ro, ro-ro, my baby,
Ah, ro-ro, my love, ro-ro.
Sleep you well, my heart's own darling,
While we sing you our ro-ro !

Sing, my friends, and make you merry,
Joy and mirth, and joy again !
Lo, He lives, the King of Heaven,
Now and evermore, Amen !

The Oxford book records this carol as 'Galician', and perhaps this means Polish Galicia. Or was the carol written before Poles came into that territory ? Somehow, with its touch of naivety, of drama, of urgency, it reminds me of the certainly Polish carol : "Midnight was chiming", with its refrain "Call up the shepherds ! There's no time to falter, Kuba and Mikolaj, loosen the halter ! Sheep, ewes and lambs, The goats all, and rams, Must quickly be freed !"

Some of the carols of Poland make us think of St. Joseph's lantern, shining bright in the stable at Bethlehem, rather than of the outdoor scene of the comet-silvered heavens. One of these lovable carols is "How can we console Him". According to the note given in Jan Slivinski's book, "Christmas Carols from Poland", this one dates from the seventeenth century :

How can we console Him, dear companions mine ?
This poor child is freezing, freezing does He pine.

Let us sing Him songs of laughter,
And to please Him dance thereafter,
Hotes, hotes, hotes, hotes !

Is the Babe yearning for His Mother dear ?
Let us call her gently, she must be quite near.
Come, Matula, soothe His pining,
Make his eyes again all shining,
Hotes, hotes, hotes, hotes !

The author of "Christmas Carols from Poland" says the word we have printed "hotes" is so pronounced. (He spells it *hoc*.) It looks as if it were one of those sound-words used in children's games ; it reminds me of the "trot, trot, trot" in the famous "John Smith, fella fine". "Matula" is an endearment word for mother, here of course Our Lady.

"Comely the Maiden", compares with the carol just given as a snowdrop to a gay red bell on the Christmas tree :

Comely the Maiden when she bore our Jesus,
Wrapped Him, and laid Him where the hay was sweetest.
O, hay ! the warm hay, fair as the lily
When Mary laid Him in the lowly stable."

One of the attractive features of the Polish carols is their naivety and simplicity of statement. Note the last line of this stave from "Over that Mountain" :

Over that mountain, see, what a brightness !
Shepherds this and that way straying,
Merrily on their organs playing :
Why is this ? I don't know why !

But by the next verse the speaker has found out the reason :

Play on, ye shepherds, may God help ye !
Tell me where to find the maiden
With that sweetest grape-bunch laden,
Mary, blessed Maiden Mary !

And one cannot write of Polish Christmas carols and leave out "In the still night", sung in the Pastoral Mass as the Introit. Both melodies and words of these carols are like the entrancing yet somehow solemn fragrance of Christmas fir and box. They remind me of the frosty earth, the silent woods, of stars and snow and Christmas bells.

MARY MANNERS SIMPSON

A TERCENTENARY

THE tercentenary of the birth of St. Margaret Mary Alacoque (1644-1690), the initiator, with St. John Eudes and Bd. Father Claude de la Colombière, S.J., of the devotion to the Sacred Heart, has induced the monastery of the Visitation of Paray-le-Monial to prepare a volume of her selected works, with a preface by Father Monier-Vinard, S.J. This volume collects the essential writings of the saint : her biography written by herself in 1685-1686 upon the order of her confessor, Father Rolin, S.J. ; several writings composed upon the order of her Superior, Mother de Saumaise ; several retreat notes ; several letters addressed to Mother

de Saumaise, to Mother Greyfié, to Sister de la Barge, and to her two brothers, the first one a village curé, the second a married man with many children.

In his preface Father Monier-Vinard recalls the four great visions and revelations with which St. Margaret was honoured. Our Lord complained to her of the indifference of men to His love and ordered her to institute, in honour of His loving and suffering Heart, an annual feast which was approved, in 1765, by Pope Clement XIII and extended in 1856 by Pope Pius IX to the universal Church. Our Lord also advocated frequent communion (then combated by the Jansenists), the 'atoning' communion on the first Friday of each month, the weekly hour of atoning worship on the Thursday to Friday night.

The autobiography of St. Margaret is at once a delightful and sublime work. Its manuscript is kept in the monastery of Paray-le-Monial. I believe it has been translated into English. The saint tells her pious and unfortunate childhood, for she lost her father, a village notary, very early, and was persecuted by her grandmother and her aunt; and even, later on, by her mother, who could not understand that St. Margaret did not want to marry but preferred entering the convent. Then she tells of her youth spent in innocent dissipations and works of charity, her irresistible vocation, her rather hard life in the convent of Paray-le-Monial where, at first, she was not understood by her superiors and the other sisters, but was always backed up by her confessors who were Jesuits (Father de la Columbière, Father Croiset, Father Rolin). Saints are uncommon people; it is natural that their neighbours should be surprised at them.

Perhaps the most graceful, the most humanistic page of the autobiography is the one where Margaret Alacoque tells about her Profession retreat, I will try to translate it, but the beauty of the tone and of the language is untranslatable:

I did not care about time or place, since My Lord was everywhere with me. I was indifferent to whatever way I might be disposed of, for My Lord could not be taken away from me, and that made me happy anywhere. They made me carry out my profession retreat in keeping care of the convent donkey and her little colt in the garden. The donkey gave me plenty of exercise for I was not allowed to tie her up, and I had to keep her in a small corner, for fear she might do some harm; both were running all the time. I had no rest until the evening *Angelus*, when I went to supper. Then, during the *Matin* hours, I would return to the stable to give them food. I felt so happy in that occupation that I should not have cared if it had lasted all my life. My Lord kept me such faithful company that all this racing about did not worry me at all. . . .

Margaret Alacoque was a *villageoise*. She has in her the good-tempered witty smile of a country girl.

According to her chief biographer, Mgr. Gauthey, Archbishop of Besançon her letters are the most remarkable part of her writings. Some of them, dated 1689, deal with the consecration of France to the Sacred Heart asked for by Our Lord. This was carried out two centuries later by the building of the Basilica at Montmartre.

Margaret Mary Alacoque was beatified in 1864, canonised in 1920. Pius XI extended her feast (October 17th) to the universal Church in 1929.

PIERRE MESSIAEN

II. OUR CONTEMPORARIES

A French monthly, intended for devout educated Catholics, and not only for religious, which could with profit become better known in this country (when times are more normal) than it seems yet to be, is **La Vie Spirituelle**, published, in the series Editions du Cerf, by Lecomte, Paris. The October and November numbers are full of good things, mostly by members of religious Orders among whom the Dominican Fathers seem to predominate. An introduction to St. John of the Cross, a sermon of Thomas Aquinas on the royalty of Christ, the life of prayer in the Psalms, a sketch of the history of St. John de Britto, an article on the Last Anointing are some of the subjects treated, in these two numbers, in fairly short articles. Each number is a small octavo volume of over 100 pages, and the contents are grouped conveniently under such headings as Feasts of the Month, The Mysteries of God, Our Sanctification, and *Chroniques* which recount such current events as pilgrimages and other notable religious celebrations. The journal is now in its 26th year.

The last two numbers of **Nouvelle Revue Théologique**, which is edited by a group of Jesuit theologians at Louvain, mingle purely theological themes with articles on lighter subjects, but of special religious interest: historical, related to current events, and even what could almost be called literary subjects, such as Newman as preacher (by C. Pasquier in the Sept.-Oct. number). There is an article on Fenelon in the same number, and two others on some effects of the war in Belgium and in Holland. The November *Revue* has a paper on "The Grace of Christ" which is described as a theological meditation. It draws illustrations from French literature and quotes Péguy more than once. Another on "Aspects of Doubt in the Nineteenth Century," by Paul Renaudin, is also full of literary references. Reviews and the recording of the Acts of the Holy See occupy some part of each number. This, like the last journal noticed, is one that could be recommended to educated lay Catholics in our country, were not all intellectual communications between nations being made so difficult by their governments, just at a time when the interchange of ideas might seem to be of such special value and importance.

More than half the October number of the **American Catholic Historical Review** is occupied by reviews of books, one of which has the, at first sight surprising, title: "A History of American Philosophy" (by Professor Schneider of Colombia University). The reviewer finds that section of the book most interesting which looks to the future, where the Professor sees as one of the three chief influences to be at work "the sophisticated, modernized versions of Catholic scholasticism that have come to us from Paris." Can this be for M. Maritain's address! It is the Professor's only allusion to scholasticism, the reviewer tells us. The same number contains two articles of considerable interest for readers over here. One is an account of the life and work of the author of "The English Colleges and Convents in the Low Countries, 1558-1795," by the Rev. Peter Guilday, published in London in 1914, a book which is a landmark in our Catholic Records and a mass of information about the men and women who faced exile in order to embrace the religious life. Monsignor Guilday (he was made a Domestic Prelate by Pope Pius XI in 1935) died last July in Washington. He was the founder of the American Catholic Historical Society and first editor of the *Catholic Historical Review*. To the article there

is prefixed an exceptionally fine portrait of the Monsignor in his robes. The other article is a very intimate account of the activities of the late Archbishop Ireland in relation with President McKinley and the United States Government on the eve of the Spanish-American war. The story, which is involved with some episcopal controversies and rivalries, is, if not in all respects edifying, of great interest, and is carefully and vividly told. The point of the narrative for American Catholic history lies in the fact that it was from these events that there came the wider realization, by the rest of the Catholic world and even by the Holy See, of the force and importance of American Catholicism; and by the United States Government of the importance of the Holy See for world affairs: two realizations which might be said to have been then already "overdue."

The November issue of *Études* contains a chatty and charming article by Pierre Janelle in which he recounts his "Impressions Britanniques" when on a visit to this country at the time of the last harvest. The corn growing up to the hedges, where sheep were rather to be expected, made England, or, particularly, south-east Scotland, take on for him "un aspect nouveau qui rappelle souvent, a s'y méprendre, celui de la campagne française." He found Englishmen in railway carriages, and on the roads in their cars, more communicative, friendly and helpful to one another and to the stranger than he had found them before. This he ascribes to the war, about which and its civilian perils and the tendency of civilians to ignore its threats he has a number of anecdotes. "Le spectacle de la souffrance au cours de la guerre," he concludes, "a humanisé les Britanniques." But not all civilians it would seem were equally calm in moments of emergency; for he puts it on record that the Farm Street Fathers, when their roof caught fire from an incendiary bomb, organized a row of bucket passers while ranks of perfectly good fire extinguishers were left forgotten! The writer found, rather surprisingly, that the general atmosphere on this side the Channel was not one of depression but of gaiety and optimism. He had every assistance as a visitor from abroad from the British Council who provided him even with facilities to interview "les représentants du parti nationaliste écossais le quel est violemment antibritannique." This number of *Études* contains an article on the sacred music of Arthur Honegger, and a brief account of the third Congress of French-speaking philosophical Societies at Brussels and Louvain last September. The principal theme of the discussions was "les Valeurs."

The *Gregorianum*, edited at the Gregorian University, Rome, is, as one would expect, a thoroughly international journal, and the latest number (Vol. xxviii, 2-3, 1947) contains articles in Italian, French, German and Latin. The contributions, as one might also expect, are of a highly learned character, and not for the general. Among them will be found a critique of Père de Lubac's recent book "Surnaturel, études historiques"; a discussion of the meaning of 'absolute' and 'relative' in respect of Time (F. Selvaggi, S.J.); a German article by F. Pelster, S.J., "Das Ur-Correctorium Wilhelms de la Mare" dealing with 13th century English commentators of Saint Thomas; another by two Jesuit Fathers (Seiler and Strater) "De Modalitate Corredemptionis B. Mariæ Virginis," where there is question only of the mode of a doctrine pre-supposed: "Remanet alia quæstio de modalitate corredemptionis, scilicet quonam modo locum habuerit cooperatio Mariæ." There is also a study by Padre V. Monachino, S.J., on the Pastoral Care of the Faithful in Carthage of the Fourth Century, with special reference to Penance.

REVIEWS

MYSTICS ALL¹

THE sub-title to this book is a little misleading, though the editor is at pains to point out, in his introduction, that "the work is not a mere collection of mystical texts. . . . A number of texts in it are not mystical in the strict sense"; he has included many "texts which, while not in themselves mystical, help to prepare the mind for truly mystical writings". This warning is opportune, and might perhaps have been stressed more than it is. Plato and Plotinus we half-expect to find; Gerard Manley Hopkins we can allow, if with some surprise; but such names as Tagore, Bloy, Claudel, Pascal, look slightly out of place when listed with Teresa, John of the Cross, Catherine, and the other mighty ones. Clearly, the word "mystic" must be given a far broader interpretation than it usually receives. No harm in that, perhaps; and, certainly, with the general purpose of the collection we are wholly in sympathy. Only, the inexperienced (whom Fr. Rheinhold has chiefly in mind?) must beware of treating all names as if they were of equal authority and orthodoxy. "Natural mysticism" may be good, as far as it goes; it may also, in the minds of the unwary, be a misleading and dangerous phrase.

A more important feature is the practical ignoring, throughout the book, of all reference to strictly "contemplative" prayer. And if, the compiler's aim is to make more easy "the approach to mystical thought and experience", we might reasonably have expected, in a work of nearly 400 pages, something more than a passing reference to the method of prayer which must be, for the overwhelming majority of people, the starting-point of that approach. This is not the place to raise again the controversial question of the use of images in prayer, but Fr. Rheinhold has given only one side of the question, and has ignored the other. This, in a work which professes to be a general introduction, seems scarcely fair. We are told what Plotinus, Pseudo-Denis and Eckhart have to say on this matter; we are not told (although other quotations are given from their writings) what Teresa says, or Bonaventure, or Ignatius. Incidentally, the phrase in the biographical index which describes Bernard of Clairvaux as "inaugurator of the new medieval spirituality and sentimental mysticism" may create quite a false impression in the minds of those who habitually give ordinary adjectives their ordinary meaning. And is it not something of an over-simplification to say, of the Pseudo-Denis, that his "orthodoxy is established through the commentaries of Maximus Confessor"?

Yet this collection is one which will give pleasure, and bring profit, to many. It is always interesting, always readable. Fr. Rheinhold has chosen his translations wisely, and the general standard is excellent. Any collection, or selection, must always be limited; but Fr. Rheinhold, within these limits, has tried to give us of the best. Many will feel grateful for what he has done.

The book is attractively printed and set out. (But why is there no full list of references?) Misprints are very few; it is unfortunate that the

¹ *The Spear of Gold: Revelations of the Mystics*. Edited by H. A. Reinhold. London Burns Oates, 1947. Pp. xx, 386. Price, 16s. od.

most glaring of these should occur in the very beginning of the biographical index, where Madame Acarie is allotted a life-span of some 262 years.

W. A. G.

A NOVEL FATIMA¹

THIS book is described as a 'novel', and the jacket says it is meant to do for Fatima what Werfel's 'Song of Bernadette' did for Lourdes. There is however this difference—Werfel was a non-Christian Jew who was touched by the lovely story of Lourdes and gave himself full liberty to 'embroider' the events that he related. Mr. O'Connell writes as a Catholic. We ourselves find the undecorated account of Lourdes, never outstripping the contemporary documents, infinitely more moving than the 'Song', but that may be a matter of taste; at anyrate after Fr. Cros, S.J., had published his 3 volume book on Lourdes the facts were accessible. We have to say that we think it quite unjustifiable to produce a romance about Fatima, full of purely imaginary conversations and descriptions, when the actual documents have not yet been fully published nor submitted to critical examination by Catholic theologians and psychologists. Of course 'criticism' as such is not expected in so 'popular' a book as this one: but after all, it costs 8s. 6d., and cannot be meant only for very 'simple' people—and indeed, an author ought to be doubly careful about these, who *cannot* criticise.

Of course the author does not touch on the major problem—that the Apparition said she would not reveal her identity till the final visit in October, whereas not only Francisco in reply to Canon Formigao said, on September 27, "I saw (during these last months) the Blessed Virgin", but the Canon himself asked Jacinta: "Did you see the Blessed Virgin on the 13th of each month from May till now?": "Yes, I saw her". We can easily allow for a slight inaccuracy creeping, here, into the Canon's report of his interrogation: but in 1936 and 1941 Lucia makes the Vision constantly refer to 'my Immaculate Heart', leaving no doubt as to who the Lady was. Yet the earlier documents always revert to 'the Lady', and when at last on October 13 she was earnestly asked to say who she was, she answered: "I am the Lady of the Rosary" (see Fr. de Marchi's most recent and authoritative book, *Era uma Senhora mais brilhante*, etc., p. 165), and in Portugal it was emphasised to me that she did *not* say: "I am Our Lady of the Rosary", though that is the formula you find in all the other books that I have read, I think, including this one (p. 142). As for the enigmatic Angel, he is here described as having 'delicate, almost effeminate, features like chiselled marble' and 'finely-moulded lips' and so forth. There is nothing of this insipid materialism in the children's account. The Lady is here described as having a 'gossamer veil richly embroidered with gold' and a gold cord at the neck which 'ended in two tassels'. But Lucia said there was *no* embroidery: at the neck was a sort of 'ray'—she could not explain this: in fact they knew the difference between cloak, hands, tunic, face only by 'variations in light'.

Not only purely imaginary conversations and incidents are included, but *characters* are fictitiously described, and events are wildly exaggerated (the solar phenomenon: the aurora borealis: p. 162 sq): should the author have come across documents wholly unknown to us, of course

¹ *Light over Fatima*. By C. C. O'Connell. Mercier Press, Cork. Pp. 163; 8s. 6d.

we apologise, but the more we believe that a supernatural event occurred at Fatima, the more we hold that the known facts should be allowed to speak for themselves. The book does not seem to have an Imprimatur.

C. C. M.

ROGUE POET¹

I WILL not say, as Sterne said when starting upon his *Sentimental Journey*, that "they order these things better in France"—but they can certainly do them very well when they choose. This is a beautiful volume and François Villon would be a proud man and, I fancy, a little abashed, to see it. Paper, type, spacing—the whole get-up and format—are as nearly perfect as could be desired.

The incidental adornment, if a little heavy as modern woodcuts tend to be, are also good. There are also three engravings by Mario Prassinis. The matter and arrangement of the volume and of the Poems themselves are also admirable.

M. Pierre Messiaen is a sound and discriminating Editor who knows his Villon as Villon should be known and sets him forth with judgment and understanding. In his short *Avant Propos*, of a single page, he tells us that he has followed the text of the two best earlier classic editions: of Louis Thouane (Paris. Picard. 1923) and Longnon-Foulet (Paris. Champion. 1932), and has made full use of their labours; that he has had in view the honest reader, the man who loves and re-reads Villon because he is the great lyric poet of France's middle age; that he has not modernized the spelling because he believes that Villon, like Rabelais and Montaigne, should be read and tasted in the form in which he wrote; that he has placed such critical historical and explanatory notes as are absolutely necessary at the side of the text (an admirable plan); and that he has added to his own short biography and to his own critical appreciation of the Poet some of the appreciations of other critics and lovers including Robert Louis Stevenson's essay on Villon published originally (in 1878) in the *Cornhill Magazine* and afterwards included in the volume *Familiar Studies of Men and Books*. I could have wished that he had not included this, for though Stevenson does full justice to Villon as a poet—"This gallows-bird was in his time the sole great writer of his country, for France the creator of modern literature"—he shows less than his usual insight in his judgment of him as a man. Indeed, in his Preface to *Familiar Studies*, Stevenson regretted having written the essay and recanted something of its uncharitableness. (His short story about Villon is much better than his essay.)

It is true, of course, that to judge Villon charitably is not easy, even for a Catholic, and that the Presbyterian in Stevenson's blood made it much more difficult for him. It is absolutely necessary, to begin with, to see clearly the period in which he was born and the conditions in which he was brought up till he was seven years old. One cannot recount these in a review, but a knowledge of them is necessary for an understanding of Villon both as a man and as a poet.

As to his poetry, full justice has been done to it, almost from the first. Even so strict and Augustan a critic as Boileau acclaims him as "*le premier*

¹ *Les Œuvres de François Villon. Commentées par Pierre Messiaen. Desclée de Brouwer, 1946.*

poète articulé de la langue Française." He was not only the first but for a considerable time he was (even more than our own Chaucer was for us) the only one. He possessed, in a supreme degree, the two essential qualities of a poet—the sense of beauty and the sense of rhythm. They shine and sing even in the often sordid subjects of his verse. You may say of those who followed him, of Ronsard and the Pleiads, that they too possessed these essential qualities; but it was he who taught them. They learned from him and in the learning lost a little of his fierceness and his force. There is more thought in Villon and a greater intensity of expression than in any of them. Ronsard sings as rhythmically—more sweetly perhaps—but not he, nor any of the others, rings a bell in your head, as Villon does, so that you hear it chiming after it has ceased. Ronsard might very nearly have written the *Ballade des dames du temps jadis*, but he could never have achieved the *Ballade* known as *L'Épithaphe Villon* or the *Ballade des Pendus* or, indeed, the greater part of the *Testament*.

As to Villon the man, Pierre Messiaen has said all that can be said of him in understanding and in extenuation. When summing up he writes, "*Dieu me garde de canoniser Villon! Ou ne saurait oublier qu'il fut pécheur, recidiviste et incorrigible; voleur, cambrioleur, souteneur, brigand, meurtrier, trois fois condamné à mort.*" Yet, after that exordium he finds below that sordid and crapulous surface some soul of goodness, and insists (as one must) that this Villon, murderer, thief and boaster, "yet had in him to the end something of the child: and a Christian spirit", and, though none knows how or when he died, imagines for him "a good death, praying to Our Lady, and finding a place in Paradise." This may sound extravagantly charitable but it is true that, if you read him fairly, you will see that Villon never blasphemed, and never committed that sin by which the Angels fell; that for all his whinings of poverty and all his snarling envy of the rich and hungry, he knew well that his poverty and his misery and his misfortunes were of his own making. At least he was not a hypocrite, and he always believed in God and in His infinite mercy—and he loved Our Lady. That should be enough to save him of whom Pierre Messiaen says finally, "*François Villon, c'est le Bon Larron de la poésie française*".

W. B.

ALPHA AND OMEGA¹

WE are always glad when a Catholic undertakes a commentary, both devotional and scientific, on the Apocalypse, so little is it read amongst us, and so often is it interpreted by non-Catholics in a purely fanciful way. We are however rather puzzled by the question of what readers this short book (pp. 151) is intended for. Certainly it is very hard to write briefly about the Apocalypse, so completely different is its author's imagination from ours; so obscure to us are innumerable allusions which would have been perfectly clear to its first readers; so doubtful must many of the applications of St. John's 'numerical' method even now remain. And we say at once that we are surprised that the author feels he has discovered a sevenfold group of 'mysteries' in c. xii-xv, 4. So long ago as 1922 we published a small book on the Apocalypse in which we 'articulated' that group, feeling moreover that we were but following

¹*The Apocalypse of Saint John*: by R. J. Loenertz, O.P. Translated by Hilary Carpenter: O.P. Sheed and Ward. 1947. 8s. 6d.

the late Fr. Allo's lead, though in the latter part of his book he is more hesitating about the details of such articulations than in the earlier.

Nor can we feel that Fr. Loenertz is right in calculating the 'Letters to the Seven Churches' as the first of a series of Sevens, because it has no *interior* grouping, whereas the Sevens in the body of the book are each so interestingly arranged in the system 4, 2 (a double intercalated vision), and 1. But this sort of discussion belongs, we think, to a much larger book meant for scholars, and so, perhaps, is almost any recondite discovery of numerical-alphabetical values (like that of the name of 'David'); while much more space might have been given to 'pictorial' facts which surely, would enchant the ordinary reader—for example, the extreme appositeness of the symbolic promises made to each of the 'Seven' Churches: e.g. the white wool, the pure gold, the true *collyrium* offered to Laodicea so proud of its black wool, its banking-tables, and its world-famous eye-salve, not to dwell on the nauseating tepid water poured down from Hierapolis just opposite, and *why* does John describe the 'four living creatures' as lion, eagle, etc.: and *what* does he visualise when he describes them as 'full of eyes' not only before and behind, but 'within'? A reviewer is tempted by the very mass of detail in the Apocalypse to spend time over, precisely, details such as these: so we add no more than that no argument will make us separate the 'white horse' from the three that follow it: I certainly see in him what we would now call that 'imperialism' which of necessity breeds war, bitter impoverishment, and final disaster. (John uses many symbols more than once and in different senses: nothing can be deduced from the white horse of the Victor in c. xix, to which, I think, no allusion is made in the rather puzzlingly selected index where we have: "Four Horsemen, The": and "Horsemen, The Four", and quite vague references, like: "Materials": and only one allusion to the constantly recurrent theme of "Tribulation".)

We venture then to think that the valuable element in the book is its ever-needed insistence on the *enduring battle* between Michael and Satan: the enduring contrast between the Bride of Christ and her frightful parody, the World-Harlot: the Lamb, slain yet alive, and the Beast, wounded to death yet fighting still to the very last gasp. The book contains no prophecy of the 'when' of God's final triumph: but it does arouse us—or should—from our terrible torpor and all-but unconsciousness of the spiritual warfare in which we, along with angels good and evil, are all the while involved.

C. C. M.

SHORT NOTICES

LITERARY

Newman, in one of the most beautiful passages in all his works, speaks of Virgil "giving utterance, as the voice of Nature herself, to that pain and weariness, yet hope of better things, which is the experience of her children in every time". The passage brings to a close Mr. F. J. H. Letters' *Virgil* (Sheed and Ward, 1946. Pp. 168. Price 8s. 6d.). For this writer, too, Virgil is "one of the great voices of humanity", and his poetry, with its gift of speaking to the heart with words of strength and inspiration, is as vitalising as it has ever been. Mr. Letters writes in the

main for the general reader; his book was "written in contemplation of the time when a knowledge of Latin would have ceased to be necessary for matriculation". His six chapters move in ordered succession. First there is a discussion of the background of Latin literature necessary for a just appreciation of Virgil's literary position. A second chapter gives some account of Virgil's influence through the ages, and sketches in what is known of his early life, which is next to nothing in the opinion of the author—for him Virgil's literary career, so far as we know it, begins with the *Eclogues*. The third and fourth chapters deal with the *Eclogues* and *Georgics* respectively, and the last two chapters are devoted to the *Aeneid*. A short *Conclusion* re-states the belief that "Virgil's poetry has depths even yet unsounded", and discusses the position his poems will have with the general body of poetry-lovers in the future. The scholarship of the book is sound, but, if we are to judge the author by his own standards, it is perhaps a little too good, too exact, for the general reader. The quotations are all accompanied by a prose translation. We think a verse translation, though liable to mislead, would be nearer the spirit than a fairly literal one, and would strike a more authentic note. Mr. Letters is, by his own acknowledgment, a poet himself, and it would have been at least interesting to have had verse translations from his own pen. Scholars will find in this book much for their consideration, much to refresh their memories with, though I fancy they will be put out by some uncorrected Greek, in a Teutonic fount that would be tolerable were it not for a hideous *beta*. The discriminating 'barbarian', too, will find much for his profit, interest, and instruction.

Father Arthur Little, S.J., a practising poet, as well as priest and philosopher, synthesises his views on art in a volume that is clearly the fruit of deep meditation by a wise and well-stored mind. Its title is **The Nature of Art or The Shield of Pallas**. (Longmans. 1946. Pp. x, 264. Price 8s. 6d.). Art, of course, is concerned with the beautiful: that is a presupposition, a refreshing refusal to have truck with new-fangled perversions of artistic theory. The greater part of the book is taken up with a discussion of 'significant' art, and it is here that Father Little parts company with those whose philosophy of art admits only 'intrinsic' beauty, *quod visum placet*. His criticism of Maritain, for example, is that his theory 'takes no account of the power of a great work of art to awaken echoes or hint at invisible horizons and by exploiting association to invoke a beauty not its own'. For there is in 'significant' art a "master-beauty that entrances us, giving to the work that quality of magic that is rightly deemed its patent of authenticity". This master-beauty the author holds to be the beauty of the human soul: 'significant' art is, in fact, "any form of address to the imagination capable of representing universal human experience and, by communicating it, of intuitively manifesting in its communication the greatness and beauty of the human soul". For those who like labels the author calls his theory Aesthetic Humanism. The discussion of 'significant' art raises the work to a level of introspection that is somewhat beyond the equipment of the 'general reader', but Father Little is engagingly candid, and makes no bones about its difficulty. He does claim, however, that "an educated man, lacking technical training in philosophy but endowed with an heroically obstinate curiosity, can without reference to other books understand this one by dint of sustained concentration." There is certainly treasure for the patient prospector. There is a good deal of matter that is, on a strict view, merely collateral

but which is extremely valuable and satisfying. Two chapters illustrating the main theme are concerned with tragedy; there is a pregnant chapter on 'The Use and Abuse of Tradition', which might well be developed into something longer; finally, there are three chapters on the relation of art to morality, and a short final one on 'Art and Life'. The book is a substantial piece of scholarship, written in a delightful, flowing style. We hope that, even among English readers, there will be many heroically obstinate.

It is difficult for an English reader to appreciate **Creative Writing in New Zealand** (by J. C. Reid, M.A.: Auckland: 1946), for although he mentions the names of many writers in his less than 100 pages, he has but little room for quotation, so as to show us what *we* should recognise as creative, not just imitative and so, sterile. We welcome New Zealand artists and authors over here, but we implore them to return more richly *themselves* and able more livingly to reveal to us their own land. We all do homage to Katherine Mansfield, but she was almost an emigrant hither: we enjoy Ngaio Marsh, but even her descriptions of New Zealand are hardly 'creative literature'. We are horrified if Eileen Duggan is not adequately valued, and perhaps Mr. Reid's explanation, though disheartening, may be the right one. In chapter one, "The New Zealand Temper", he regards his nation as emphasising the material as against the spiritual. The ideal of its 'educational pragmatists' would be 'useful' culture and the 'technological institute'. Hence, conscientious mediocrity, lack of imagination, a tendency to import literary fashions "already a little out of date". And "the dynamic cultural force of Christianity has been replaced by political humanitarianism and social dilettantism". Hence the forcefulness of Miss Duggan's unique poems even when materially they are frail. She can affirm, where others can only describe, or regret, or question. We ourselves remain baffled by the possibility of materialism amid such scenery, in such an air, with such a history. Still, we noticed the rather old-fashioned materialism and put it down to the bulk of New Zealand's colonists having arrived disinherited from the ancient Catholic Faith; and that is why we found more spirit in many a Maori song (even translated) than in most of the impressionist or would-be 'tough' writing that came our way.

Mr. Hugh Venning's novel **The End** (Douglas Organ. 1947. Pp. 298 gs. 6d.) describes England in the year 2045 when the Last Day comes. What will be the state of this country? The author devotes the first two chapters to a general description of the English character after these hundred years of technical improvement and religious decay. Discoveries have rendered sleep, drink and food unnecessary, people are carried about in gyros and compression cars. Thanks to a policy of 'Non-Assistance' and 'Balance of Fear in Europe', the country has kept out of war, and its citizens enjoy their State-controlled liberties. Religious freedom has resulted in the evacuation of Catholics to Poland, Eire and French Canada. Organised religion is abolished, in fact any kind of religion at all. After this preliminary survey the story begins. The Founder of the Greater Roman Empire, by the name of 666, has dominated the world with the exception of the only three Catholic countries. These he proceeds to 'liquidate', and claims divine honour and worship from the rest of the world. The British Prime Minister protests—"the English have somehow retained in the heart a fund of something or other which on rare occasions is discovered to be buried treasure". Only four per cent

of Englishmen vote allegiance to 666, and even some of these retract before the hour when Michael and his angels come to destroy Antichrist and his legionaries. The apostle of England in these days is a rather vague Mr. Emmanuel who preaches the good news of the Gospel to all classes, in the East End, Park Land and even Chequers; but he is most at home—and best delineated—among children. The story is told with such lightness of touch and sustained gentle irony that the reader chuckles through the book; on closing it, however, he is not without much matter for serious reflexion.

School teachers will offer good wishes to **Junior Digest** (8 Merrion Square, Dublin, 9d.) of which we have received the first three numbers. This monthly, Catholic but not "pious", might easily on its own merits replace the stuff on which our boys and girls spend their money. The reading matter covers a very wide range: adventure tales, biographies, wonders of science, jokes, puzzles, hobbies, etc. The format is the now common one for Digests. The covers of the first two issues are not at all attractive, but there is a great improvement in the third number. We hope further improvements will be made in the designs throughout the magazine; schoolchildren have produced much better drawings than that on the inside cover of Nos. 1 and 2. We point out these defects because we would like to see the **Junior Digest** enjoy a large circulation, and to this end we think that the artistic sense of young people should not be underestimated.

HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY

A reprint of four articles, first published in periodicals, forms **Le Sens Chretien de l'Histoire** by Dom Gueranger (Editions d'Histoire et D'Art, Librairie Plon, Paris, pp. 67). The writer attacks the naturalism of nineteenth century historians and urges Catholics to write history in the light of their faith. For him the model historians are St. Augustine and Bossuet. In so limited a space Dom Gueranger can do little more than assert his convictions; and it is sufficient to note that no historian to day would accept his thesis *en bloc*. To write dissertations interpreting the story of the world in the light of faith, is not, according to the meaning ordinarily given to history to-day, the function of the historian. Just as the Catholic philosopher will appeal only to reason for his philosophical conclusions, the Catholic historian will base his reconstruction of the past on the evidence and on inductions therefrom. If the evidence postulates a miracle he will assert that a miracle occurred; but he will not attribute historic catastrophes to the Devil or to the Fall of Man because he knows that such matters belong rather to theology than history. With Dom Gueranger's plea for writers of the type of Bossuet, when they are addressing Christians, all may agree; the Catholic is meant to see the world in the light of faith; and such writers works serve to strengthen the faith of many. Such works, however, are not works of scientific history.

In his study of Peter the Venerable (**Pierre le Vénérable**. Editions de Fontenelle, Abbaye S. Wandrille, pp. xix, 407) Dom Jean Leclercq has written a valuable study of the great contemporary of St. Bernard. Peter the Venerable is a neglected figure, he is known to the average educated Catholic only as the friend of St. Bernard and the kindly abbot who received and consoled the penitent Abelard. This is a pity, for Peter the Venerable is an attractive figure who deserves to be better known.

Dom Jean Leclercq's work is divided into four parts. He first gives us the context of Peter's life and then studies him as the reformer of Cluny, as the theologian and servant of the Church, and finally in his spiritual life. The book, as Dom Leclercq confesses, adds little to our knowledge of the saint, but he has succeeded in his effort to interpret his character. Those who read this book will no longer be under the impression that the early part of the twelfth century is the age of St. Bernard alone. True, Peter the Venerable is not so dominating a figure as the great Cistercian, but he made a rich and generous contribution of his own to the life of the age, and in many ways built for the future while St. Bernard was absorbed in the present. While St. Bernard with all his mighty eloquence was urging the Second Crusade, Peter the Venerable was pleading for a more sympathetic understanding of the infidel. He commissioned a translation of the Koran, and began to write a treatise for the conversion of the Moslem. In Abelard St. Bernard saw a dangerous heretic and rightly secured his condemnation. Yet Peter not only received the penitent into his abbey, where he allowed him to give conferences to his monks, but adopted Abelard's methods in his own writings. The rest of the world was soon to follow his example. Indeed he united in himself all that was best in the intellectual life of the twelfth century. Though his activities were not so multifarious as those of the great Cistercian they were extraordinary. Not only did he engage in a vigorous apostolate of the pen, and render great services to the Papacy, but as Abbot of Cluny he was the ruler for the greater part of his life of that vast congregation whose houses are to be found in every land in Western Europe. Indeed his chief work was to reform his Order, which had fallen from its high estate during the rule of his two predecessors ; and the work of reform is harder and more laborious than the work of foundation. Only his great sanctity enabled him to carry out this delicate work, and he did it with a love and patience which won him the hearts of all. It is an attractive portrait we are here given by Dom Leclercq, and a fine interpretation of one of the noblest figures of the twelfth century. It is a pity the quality of the paper and of the illustrations are not of a high standard.

Not long ago the reproach was levelled at the Catholics of France by their opponents that the Church had done nothing during the last hundred years in the interests of the working class. It was the sheerest calumny. M. Henry Reverdy refuted it convincingly, and at the same time brought to light some interesting facts. He went through the various measures for social reform put before the *Chambre* during the last hundred years and showed that it was the Catholics who were the proposers of most of the social legislation of that period. The Church in France has a proud record in this matter, unappreciated though it be. Catholics are aware of the great social encyclicals of the Popes, but they do not know how often these same encyclicals have been used in Parliamentary debates in more than one country, and how often they have found a practical realisation in legislation, thanks to Catholic initiative. Thus the first law passed in France to regulate the conditions of work of women and children in factories (1841) was due to de Montalembert ; the laws on slum clearance, Friendly Societies, Hospitals, Public Assistance (1850) were all sponsored by de Mun. The initiative for the legal formation of mixed Trade Unions (1883-4), the first moves concerning workers' compensation (1886), workers' insurance (1888), factory conditions (1889), conciliation and arbitration councils (1889), safety laws against accidents in factories (1891,

1892) and many other aspects of social legislation were the work of Catholic laymen. In the field of practical works of charity, numerous religious congregations serving the needs of the poor have arisen in France. As a matter of historical fact, then, as well as in justice, it is important to make known the achievements of these Catholic pioneers. Among them Frederic Ozanam stands out both for his influence in the intellectual world, and for his activities as founder of the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Mrs. Crawford has told the story of this great man in **Frederic Ozanam, Catholic and Democrat**. (Catholic Social Guild, Oxford. Pp. 144 2s. 6d.) It is only a brief account of a very rich life ; but we will not find fault with that. The author is writing for an English public and she has confined herself mainly to the Christian democratic aspect of Ozanam's career. In this she is justified, because this has been much neglected in English works in favour of his connection with the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Mrs. Crawford has presented us with a fine study which should have its place in every Catholic library.

Although we in this country do not like the use of the term 'Roman Catholics' on the lips of our Protestant neighbours, and prefer to be called simply 'Catholics', the majority of us tend in practice to identify the Catholic Church with that part of it which uses the Latin rite, the part which was in early times more or less the Patriarchate of the West. For that reason we welcome most heartily Donald Attwater's **The Christian Churches of the East** (Vol. I, Bruce Publishing Co. \$4.00) which is a new edition of *The Catholic Eastern Churches* first published in 1935. For here we are reminded that there are Catholics in the world to-day who worship God according to the Alexandrian, Antiochene, Armenian, Byzantine or Chaldean rite, Catholics for whom Mass (or, as they call it, the Liturgy) is celebrated in Coptic, Syriac, Arabic, Armenian, Slavonic, Greek or Rumanian : Catholics at one with us in all essentials of the faith, but differing from us in details of the administration of the sacraments and in other ways. The author has set forth all these differences with great clarity and with the help of some excellent photographs. He gives us a brief summary of the past history and present state of each of the many groups which follow one or other of the above-mentioned rites. Yet it would be wrong to think that he merely instructs us in the true meaning of the word 'Catholic'. We are reminded that there should be no rivalry between East and West, no mutual suspicions, or feelings of superiority on one side or the other, but rather mutual sympathy and understanding. For we should begin to realize that no one nation or race or age can reflect, in anything like their fullness, the inexhaustible riches of Christ. Each nation has something to contribute. Each can therefore learn something from all the others. We in the West have something to learn not merely from the Christian Churches of the East, but something also from the Church in India and China, in Africa and Japan. The following quotation may serve as an illustration of this point : "Whoever has had occasion to assist at an Eastern Liturgy, even if only in the little church of some Ukrainian country parish, and has been struck by the intimate participation and inspired collaboration of even the most simple peasants in the wonders of the Liturgy—that perfect ensemble of teaching, prayer, and sacred action—he alone is able to estimate the treasure of doctrine, of lived faith, and of encouragement in religion of which Catholics in the West are deprived." The chief facts about the Eastern Churches are neatly tabulated in a chart at the end of the book.

There is a useful bibliography, and a glossary of terms used in describing the different rites.

DEVOTIONAL

There is little need to introduce Father S. M. Shaw to the English-speaking Catholic public, his own two books, *The Inner Temple* and *Our Living Faith*, have done that already. An inspection of the shelves of the Catholic Library at 29 Farm Street showed that the latter book was in circulation, and the former, temporarily on the shelves, has a long list of borrowers marked in it. Now this busy parish priest in the diocese of Westminster has produced a book (*Salt of the Earth*. Burns Oates. 1947. 8s. 6d.) for his fellow priests. In his introduction he very modestly suggests that this new book is for priests recently ordained. All priests will find it apt spiritual reading. There are of course the classic books for priests; Fr. Shaw alludes to Cardinal Manning's: but his own deserves a place alongside those of Canon Keating and Bishop Ward. It has not perhaps all the anecdotage and pointed application of principles of these latter, but his eighteen years of presbytery life have given Fr. Shaw a peculiar authority in the practical setting down of the permanent topics of the spiritual life. In the first section he deals with the knowledge and training of self, the second part deals with prayer, while the concluding chapters are devoted to the love of Jesus Christ. The frequent references to the New and the Old Testament, to St. John of the Cross and St. Teresa, as well as to the *Imitation* are all easy and unforced. Advice and illustration are the more telling as they are unobtrusive. The standard which Fr. Shaw sets is a high one, but it is based authentically on Our Lord's own teaching and on that of the saints. No priest of the many who will read this would have it otherwise. The book is well produced and printed, though the printing (in my copy at least) shows through the page, and the title and the author's name on the spine of the cover might be clearer and better spaced. One interesting point serves to indicate the consistency of the message of more than one page in the book—the writing of the treatise was done during the author's holidays.

Some years ago THE MONTH printed an article deprecating the growing practice, even among Catholics, of sending cards for Christmas which bore no relation whatever to the holiness of this Season. We were told by many that to ask for cards representing the Nativity was to be thought eccentric by many shopkeepers. That excuse is now quite out of date, and once again we are delighted to welcome a selection of the beautiful Christmas cards associated with the name of Mr. Edward Westbrook (11 Dorset Road South, from which address they are obtainable.) All are truly *Christmas cards*, having some aspect of the Nativity as the centrepiece. They should suit all tastes (and purses) for they range from the exquisite reproduction of Fra Fillipo Lippi's Madonna and Child (at the very low price of 12s. 8d. a dozen, including large envelopes) to delightful modern designs at 2s. 9d. per dozen, with envelopes. One thing we would ask of Mr. Westbrook is to send his cards earlier for review. Many arrange their Christmas greetings well ahead, and the chance of getting real Christmas cards this year may have come too late for some. But we congratulate this art publisher on his excellent work, and especially on providing the means to resist the habit of the pagan Christmas card.

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(*Apoc.* xxii, 2.)

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